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COVER: Four SOF staffers traveled to Lima to report on drug interdiction efforts and discovered an American training Peru's elite police units. Their unique live fire exercise is the subject of this first in a series of Peru exclusives. Story begins on page 36. Photo: Courtesy Peruvian police
INSET: Guatemalan army's Cobra Company strikes at guerrilla terror in the mountainous jungle of Quiche Province. Story on page 42. Photo: Joe Cavanaugh



COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

Lessons of Afghanistan

ASSUMING there is not a last-minute betrayal, as this issue of *Soldier of Fortune* reaches the newsstands the Soviet Union will be ending its bloody adventure in Afghanistan. The Afghan mujahideen have won one of the greatest victories of the 20th century. Are there any lessons Americans can learn from the Afghan experience?

There are plenty, but two stand out.

The first is that new weapons such as the FIM-92A Stinger anti-aircraft missile and the Milan antitank missile are fast redressing the balance on the battlefield in favor of the grunt. The former denied the Soviets free movement by air; the latter — which I saw and photographed during a recent visit to a mujahideen base in Afghanistan — will deny the Soviets the roads should they choose to stay.

The most striking thing about these weapons is that while they presently cost a lot — about \$40,000 for a Stinger — it didn't take very many of them to get the job done (fewer than 1,000 Stingers have been supplied) and they are going to get a lot cheaper and more common in the future, as the price of their electronics comes down. Western armies better think long and hard about how they intend to employ helicopters and armor on future battlefields where such weapons will inevitably become nearly as common as squad automatic weapons — or to what extent they can be employed at all.

Second, a country whose people keep and bear arms is infinitely better prepared to resist a foreign invader than one whose people do not. When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan on 27 December 1979, the most common rifle in the country seemed to be the .303 Lee Enfield — some ancients even took to the field with muzzle-loading Jezails — and practically no Western observers gave the badly divided mujahideen the remotest chance of prevailing. What the experts failed to recognize, however, was that the quality of the weaponry was almost beside the point; the knowledge of how to use it and willingness to use it were what was decisive.

What the Soviets found in Afghanistan was, to borrow a phrase, a people numerous and armed, one which viewed fighting for its liberty as an intrinsic part of its culture. Two years after the invasion, the mujahideen had a strong and growing force in being; in contrast two years after Poland suppressed the Solidarity trade union — which began its struggle about the same time as the muj — its supporters were reduced to making floral crosses in public squares.

America and other countries supporting the muj, including China, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, sent in more than 400,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles (which among other things turned the Soviets into major ammo suppliers for both sides) but those were only the tools to finish the job. Men who viewed armed resistance to tyrants as an act of civic duty and a matter of personal honor and had done so for centuries are what made the difference.

When we come to understand that, our own liberty will be more secure. ✕

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE (ISSN 0145-6784/USPS 120-510) is published monthly by SOLDIER OF FORTUNE Magazine, Inc., Boulder, Colorado. Second Class Postage Paid at Boulder, CO. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, Subscription Department, P.O. Box 348, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. U.S. subscription rates for twelve monthly issues: \$26.00. Canada, Mexico and all other countries: \$33.00. Special domestic and foreign rates on request. U.S. FUNDS ONLY. Single-Issue Price — U.S., \$3.50; United Kingdom, £2.50; Canada, \$4.50.

CONTRIBUTORS: Manuscripts, photographs, drawings are submitted at the contributor's own risk. Material should be mailed to Articles Editor, SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306, and cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. Any material accepted is subject to such revision as is necessary to meet the editorial requirements of SOF. All manuscripts must be typed double-spaced. All photographs should be credited and be accurately identified. Payment will be made at rates current at time of publication.

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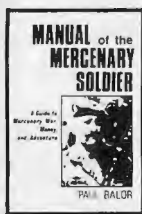


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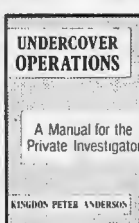
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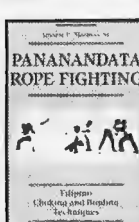
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BURMA SHAKEDOWN...

The present incompetents running Burma — they seized power in a coup last September after massive street demonstrations forced the previous incompetents running Burma out of office — have discovered some clever new ways to enhance revenues.

They apprehend people leaving banks after making withdrawals and ask them to make a "donation" of 200 kyats (about \$32) to the armed forces in honor of their "valiant fight against insurgents." Hundreds of thousands of kyats have been raised.

They are also rounding up people, mostly students, on the streets of Rangoon to serve as "porters" for military patrols in rebel areas. This is also a fund-raising measure, because the porters will be turned loose just as soon as their families pay a ransom. The going rate seems to be between 10,000 and 18,000 kyats.

The money allegedly goes to families of troopers KIA or WIA against the Karen and Shan rebels, whose support has — surprise — been growing by leaps and bounds.

Insurrection, incidentally, isn't the only bumper crop in Burma this year. It seems the opium harvest will be the best in years, the result of unusually good weather in the Golden Triangle and the army spending its time shaking down the civilian population instead of fighting druggers.

BULLETIN BOARD



Canopy frame and nose gear of MiG-21 on display in mujahideen museum are what is left after aircraft's encounter with a Stinger. Born-again aviator is presumably visiting Allah.

SOF COIN OPS...

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MUJ GET MILANS...

As this issue goes to press, we've just received word that *Soldier of Fortune* Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown is on his way back from Afghanistan with what we believe are the first photographs to reach the West of French Milan antitank missiles in the hands of the mujahideen.

The introduction of the Milan into the war could be a major development. The Milan is the French-made, antiarmor missile that the Chadian army used with devastating effect against Libyan tanks in 1987 (see "Libyan Desert Defeat," SOF, February '89).

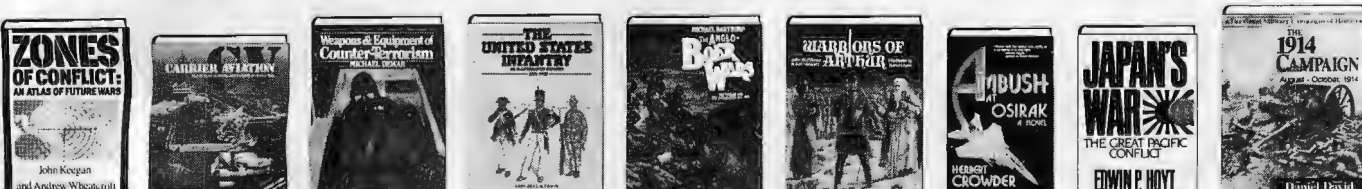
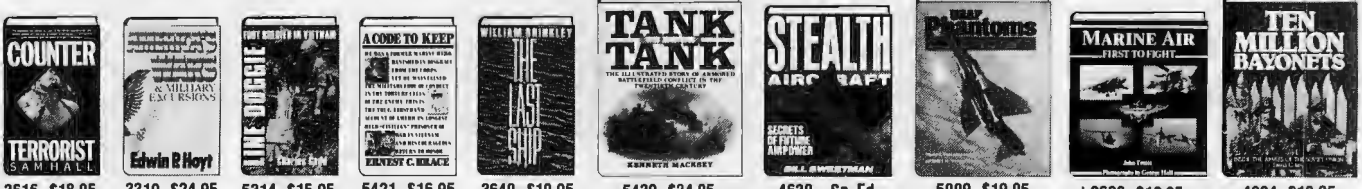
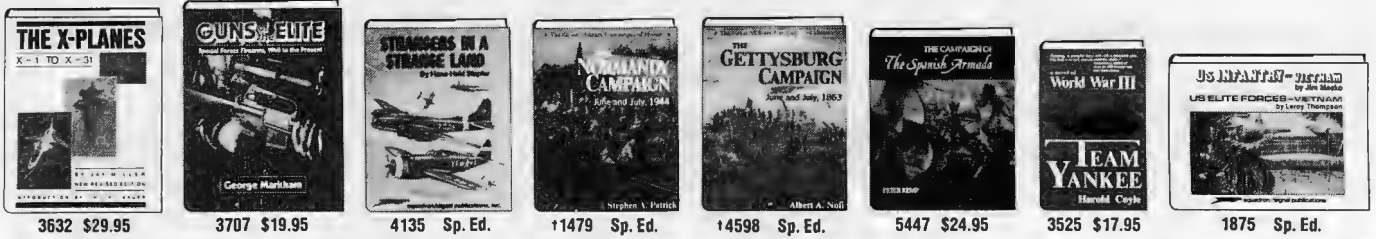
The Chadians mounted Milans on the back of Toyota pickup trucks and attacked Khadaffi's tanks using traditional desert cav tactics — two trucks would attack a single tank from opposite sides. Typically, the victim couldn't traverse his turret fast enough to get either, let alone both, although the Chadians were said to take some casualties when one of the missiles would miss the target and take out the second truck.

While the mountain valleys of eastern and northern Afghanistan don't lend themselves to a precise duplication of Chadian tactics, putting modern antitank missiles in the hands of the muj could have as profound effect on the outcome of the war as the earlier injection of Stinger antiaircraft missiles did (See David Isby's articles, "Sons of SAM," page 28, and "Flying for Moscow," page 54, in this issue). That is because Milans could limit Soviet and Kabul regime armor movement on the roads as severely as Stingers limited Soviet and Kabul regime helicopter movements in the air.

Since going home is about the only military movement in Afghanistan the Soviets are really interested in completing, that could be a distinctly sticky wicket. It may no longer be a question of *whether* the Soviets will voluntarily leave Afghanistan by 15 February, but whether they will be allowed to leave (See "Afghan Death March," SOF January '89).

That might explain why the SovComs started direct negotiations with the muj at the end of November last year. Frist subject of discussion, POWs and MIAs.

An intriguing question is *exactly* who gave Milans to the muj. SOF will have a full report on this development in a future issue.



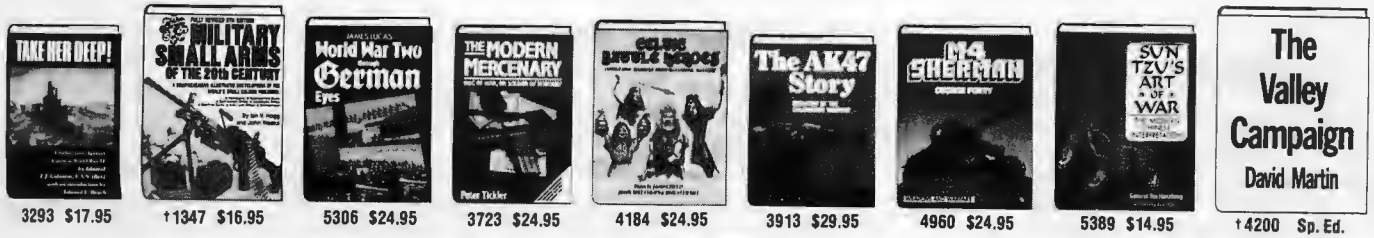
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67/M007

SOF GETS SUPPORT IN SUIT...

Appeals briefs in the \$9.4 million lawsuit against SOF were filed by our attorneys on 1 November. Shortly afterwards significant reinforcements for our side arrived in the form of a strong friend of the court brief submitted by a number of the country's largest publishers and publishing organizations.

Among those joining in the brief urging that the judgement against SOF be dismissed were the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Association of Area Business Publications, the Association of Newspaper Classified Advertising Managers, the Dallas Times Herald, the Hearst Corporation, the Louisiana Press Association, Inc., the Magazine Publishers of America, Inc., the Mississippi Newspaper Association, the National Newspaper Association, Scripps Howard, Inc., the Texas Daily Newspaper Association and Time Incorporated.

They argued that if the judgement against SOF were allowed to stand, the precedent would impose "devastating liability" on publications and "seriously damage constitutional freedoms."

Thanks, guys. It's a great feeling when the cavalry comes riding over the hill.

(Copies of both the appeal and friend of the court briefs are available by writing to Soldier of Fortune, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306, Attn: Zada Johnson. A donation of \$25 to help cover expenses would be welcomed.)

NRA ELECTIONS COMING UP...

NRA members will be receiving their official ballots for Board of Directors members in the February issue of the official journal of the NRA. *SOF Editor and Publisher* Robert K. Brown, isn't on it this time — his term on the board doesn't expire until 1991 — but Richard DeChambeau, who has worked extensively with Brown on public access issues is seeking a seat. Brown strongly urges all eligible NRA members to watch for the ballot and exercise their right to vote.

NOW HEAR THIS! YOU HAVE REACHED THE WRONG NUMBER!...

If you tried to get additional information about the 1989 SOF Convention, to be held 20-24 September at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas, by calling Convention Director Bill Brooks, you probably got the wrong number. Due to a typo in the February issue of SOF Bill's area code was incorrectly listed. The correct number for Bill Brooks is (205) 244-1916.

Our sincere apologies to the party who got all the calls intended for Bill.

KUDOS FOR SOF STAFFER...

Soldier of Fortune Assistant Editor Tom Slizewski, an expert on war gaming, is recipient of the 1987 Charles S. Roberts award for Best Game Review/Design Analysis/Play Analysis for an article he published on Victory Game's "Central America" simulation. The awards, presented annually by *Fire & Movement* magazine, are decided on the basis of a reader ballot appearing in a number of publications.

Slizewski just recently returned from the Everglades, where he accompanied German and American airborne troops on a training exercise. Full report to follow in an upcoming issue.

SOF contributor David Isby, whose articles on American Stinger missiles and the Soviet Helicopters that are their prey appear in this issue, has twice won the award.

SAY NO TO LENIN YES TO TOURISM...

That most sensitive of all barometers, tourism, shows things are not going well for communists in two countries.

The Guatemalan Tourist Commission (INGUAT) reports that tourism in that country increased 15 percent in the first eight months of 1988 compared to the same period a year ago, rising to 268,344 visitors from 233,948. That still isn't a record, but it represents a doubling of tourists from the same period when the guerrilla problem was much worse and only 126,506 people visited the country.

Meanwhile, Vietnam, whose usual way of saying it wants to be friends with you is to send back another consignment of MIA remains, is being uncharacteristically cooperative with film makers planning to make a movie out of British author Anthony Grey's 1982 novel "Saigon" (the book's name notwithstanding).

Senior government officials are said to have agreed to the use of the original battlefields in the filming and Vietnamese troopers as extras.

Grey thinks the cooperative attitude stems from the fact that Hanoi is desperate to open up to the West and attract tourists and foreign exchange.

SWISS ARMY TO RECYCLE...

Snicker if you will, but Switzerland is about to let a \$6.3 million contract to re-equip its three bicycle regiments.

Three Swiss firms have submitted proto-types, which are about to undergo field tests. The winner will supply bikes that will equip some 3,300 soldiers.

The new bike will replace a model that has been in service since 1905. It will have two gears, be capable of carrying 330 pounds, weigh around 48 pounds and cost less than \$885.

Why bicycles? "Bicycles are quick and quiet," says army spokesman Colonel J. Peter Flueckiger. "A truck or car makes noise you can hear from afar, especially at night."

Soldiers in the bicycle regiments keep their wheels at home, along with their rifles, ready to mobilize in an emergency. Fully equipped bike troops can carry up to 175 pounds of equipment, and the army figures that up to a distance of 25 miles they can actually be mobilized more quickly than motorized troops.

HONOR ROLL...

El Salvador/Nicaragua Defense Fund contributors:

Commandante Ethiopia; Ken Schustereit.

Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund contributors:

South Bend Anti-Communists.
Refugee Relief International, Inc.
contributors:

Ken Schustereit; Maecenas; R.H. "Tex" Houston.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to these people and the numerous other donors who requested their names not be printed. ✕

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cial battle... from the streets of Hue to Khe Sanh, where 6,000 Marines held off over 40,000 North Vietnamese... and to Saigon, where MPs shot it out with a Vietcong suicide squad in the U.S. Embassy compound.

"The Tet Offensive" is an eye-opening experience you won't find

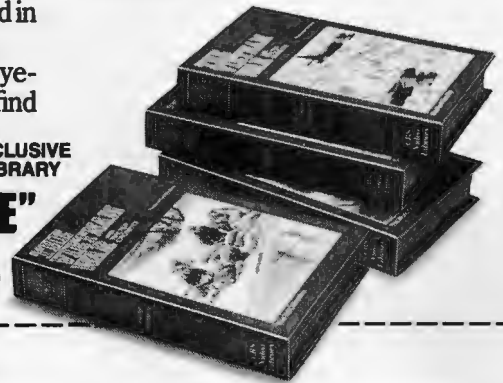
To understand Vietnam, you need added perspective. You need to see and hear it for yourself. And now you can. In the new videocassette series, *The Vietnam War with Walter Cronkite*, graphic CBS combat footage has been assembled to give you a complete picture.

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SUPPORT FIRE FROM USMC...

Sirs:

I just finished "Rangers in Grenada: The Untold Story" (SOF Nov. '88). In many of your articles you do a great job in bringing out the feel of combat and the faces of death, but this piece failed to let your readers understand the rigors of combat.

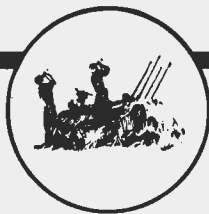
Many of the men, if not all, had never heard a shot fired in anger before. And let me say that someone shooting at you is a far cry from the rifle range or running around the swamps shooting blanks.

I think the higher ranking officers were at fault in Grenada, not the men themselves, as your article implies. From the word go, the brass had their head in their ass. I'm not pretending to be Mr. Strategy, but for over 200 years the Marine Corps has been fighting under an amphibious doctrine. So why risk the Rangers and Airborne by putting them into this role? Just because it's the only war in town is absurd.

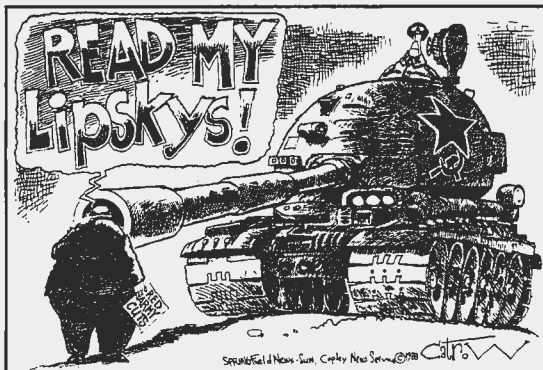
I've now been on Grenada for 15 months and have talked with many of the natives. They haven't forgotten the sacrifice made by those 19 men. As you stated, four Army and two Marine soldiers died due to combat, the remainder because of mistakes. Shouldn't we be asking why this is so? General Al Grey, USMC, said it best, "Marines are warriors, and warriors die. But the more realistic you train, the less you'll bleed in time of war."

Damn good job doggies!

Sgt. Mark
Kirkland,
USMC
St. George's,
Grenada



FLAK



NO HUMOR IN ATROCITIES...

Sirs:

You quote with approval Mr. McAsh's *The Book of the Great Ranger*, (Bulletin Board, SOF Dec. '88) including "Thou shalt not cast interrogatees from a slick at 2,000 feet — if there's anyone looking." I realize this was supposed to be humor but fail to see anything funny in comments more typical of macho posturing among young troops.

Killing prisoners of war is against American and international law. More than that, it is stupid. The professional macho will argue that throwing a prisoner from a helicopter will loosen the tongues of the rest. This is correct, but it does not guarantee that they will tell the truth. In *Silence Was A Weapon* a former military intelligence officer recounts a posting as province adviser to an area where beating a prisoner with the left hand was considered subtlety. No worthwhile intelligence was obtained. However, through his humane treatment he was consistently able to obtain timely, accurate intelligence about enemy locations. He was able to convert not only defectors but hardcore NVA regulars captured only after prying a red hot AK out of their hands.

Mistreated prisoners will not cooperate, much less volunteer information, and are much less likely to induce other enemy soldiers to stop killing Americans and surrender. Regardless of our personal feelings, war in the last half of the 20th century is heavily political. Battles are often fought for public relations purposes. On the other hand, battles can be won on the ground and lost in the newspaper.

Atrocities violate our conception of national identity, stiffen enemy resistance, weaken friendly will, disrupt our alliances, distract military and political assets, destroy intelligence assets, are morally and legally wrong and practically stupid.

Kevin L. Jamison
Kansas City, Missouri

SOF IS A GOVERNMENT FRONT...

Sirs:

After all these years I feel I can no longer subscribe to SOF. It's sad that our tour of duty has ended. SOF gave a view of the news that few could match. But I now feel that SOF has become a government front and that it propagates the government's viewpoints. I'm cancelling because SOF has joined ranks with the CIA/State Department and bought off on their "acceptable casualties" doctrine concerning POWs in Southeast Asia. I've sent money to the Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund in the past and support that cause, but what about your loyalty to fellow Americans being kept in rotting cages and caves in Laos and Vietnam.

Also, the articles about Colonel Gritz and Scott Barnes remain an injustice to the United States. With your contacts it seems unreal that SOF could not get anything out on the POWs. Of course if you did and turned them over to the government they would fall into the dusty vault they call their active files.

We are protecting the senior brass who so ineptly caused us to lose in Vietnam. President Johnson and Robert McNamara assembled a group of generals who sacrificed many troops through their policies. The troops who were left behind are being offered up to save their useless reputations. I will have no part of this.

John G. Backes
Hartford, Wisconsin

I appreciate your concern and hope you will read the magazines I'm forwarding to you and that the articles will give you insight regarding our concern and involvement with the POW issue. Please note in our Jan. '82 issue we could not describe our real mission into Laos. For security reasons, we did not tell the whole story until 1985.

Scott Barnes and Colonel Gritz are, at best, misguided zealots, at worst, unprincipled con men. We've got the proof. If you can show us otherwise, please do so. — RKB

AFGHAN CHILDREN THANK SOF READERS...

Sirs:

Upon checking our post office box today, we were surprised and very pleased to find several letters and contributions from readers of the December 1988 issue of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine.

You have done a very kind and generous deed in giving space to our project to aid the Afghan people. Thank you on behalf of all the Afghan children for helping on such a large scale.

Dana Rawding
Afghanistan
Resistance
Relief Center
Annandale,
Virginia

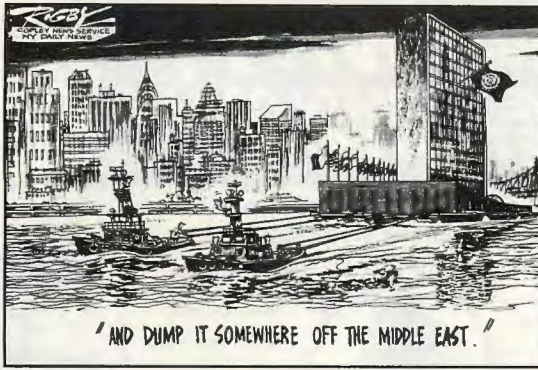
USA IS NO DEMOCRACY...

Sirs:

In "Peace Through Superior Firepower" (SOF Dec. '88) Mr. Scroft says, "I would fight to the death if anyone threatened the democracy of the United States." This from a West Point graduate? Please advise Mr. Scroft that the United States is not a democracy but a federal, constitutional republic.

This is a common error, but I'm sure the author would prefer to be technically accurate. Kudos for otherwise excellent text and photos.

Lee Knoper
Cochise, Arizona



SNIPING VERSUS FIREPOWER...

Sirs:

Reader Michael D. Ledbetter in Flak (SOF Nov. '88) commented that autoloading rifles should be sniping rifles because they're better in firefights than bolt-action rifles. Peter G. Kokalis concurred. Maybe that in itself is a reason to use bolt-action rifles for sniping, so that just maybe the people will get it in their heads that snipers are for sniping and not for firefights.

I belong to the local gun club, and we have all types of shooters. One thing I've noticed is that in competition, specialists rule the roost. The firefighter and sniper are at opposite ends of the spectrum.

As to the bolt gunner not having a chance against the AK-47 gunner, consider this: Most of the highest scores in both rapid fire and slow fire at Camp Perry are shot by bolt gunners. In my own gun club, in most rapid-fire rifle competitions bolt gunners do most of the winning, but they also make up most of the competition. In a combat situation the auto shooter who doesn't win in the first second that he pops behind cover isn't going to be around long.

Roger K. Fike
Paso Robles, California

Peter Kokalis replies: *It would be comforting if every military sniper could be assured that he would never be involved in a firefight on the battlefield. But, unlike Camp Perry or gun club competitions, targets encountered in combat usually have the capacity to return fire. Furthermore, at Camp Perry, turn-bolt rifles are not permitted in Service Rifle matches and few competitors shoot semiautomatic service rifles in the NRA Match Rifle category, so a direct comparison is not possible. In combat scenarios featuring target-rich environments against seasoned enemy personnel, the sniper will have less than two seconds to fire an aimed second shot before they take cover. Under these circumstances a semiautomatic rifle will surely prevail. Finally, the ever pragmatic Soviets have provided every mechanized infantry platoon with a semiautomatic Dragunov-armed sniper, and that should tell you something.*

BE PROUD OF YOUR SERVICE...

Sirs:

William Lane's Parting Shot ("From Saigon to Central Casting," SOF Dec. '88) comments were timely and true. We all feel deeply about people we knew and the memories they left with us. This "post traumatic stress" nonsense is something contrived by shrinks to insure government checks for their substandard practices. It also gives a guy a handy excuse to be a failure — how convenient!

Be proud of your service and quit whining to the liberal assholes that want to forever rob you of your dignity. Your "floor shows" go a long way toward legitimizing their cowardly exodus to Canada. We never lost the war; those three-piece suiters in Washington gave it away.

T. W. Pardee
Haines, Alaska

WHAT ABOUT THOSE SURVEYS...

Sirs:

As a subscriber, I dutifully responded to every one of your surveys over a year ago and remember reading that you'd fill us in on the results. Did I miss an issue or has this been shelved? I'm curious about what other SOF readers like, and look forward to seeing these results. Hope this is still going to happen. Can you tell me when?

Marty Sereti
Bombay, India

When we ran the surveys, we underestimated how many responses we would receive and did not anticipate how much time the Houston trial would take out of our time available for "extra" duties. We are currently nearing the end on the survey grading. You can expect the results to be printed within the next three to four issues.

LETTERS

Your input has made FLAK one of SOF's most popular columns. Write and tell us your opinion of SOF or any subject you consider worth our readers' attention. We reserve the right to edit for content and brevity. Send letters to FLAK, c/o SOF, PO Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. ✕

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Quality, Functionality and WARMTH...

When it comes to winter clothing, the 3 main concerns of the military are quality, functionality and WARMTH. After this they think about price.

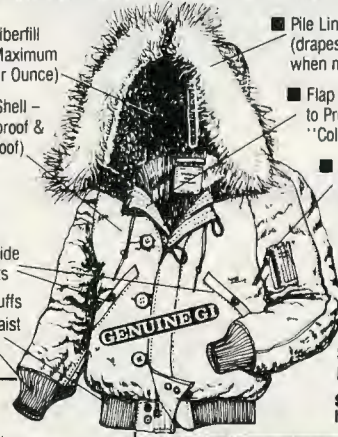
The US military wants its troops to keep warm in the winter in clothes that will last a bunch of winters. They know quality costs more.

Genuine military clothing isn't the cheapest. But as every ex-GI knows, the clothes seem to last forever, they're very, very warm and designed to be functional.

Most of the items in this ad are current military issue, brand new and unconditionally guaranteed to satisfy you or your money back. And when you consider the quality, do the prices seem high at all?

USAF Heavyweight Flight Jacket - Type N2B DESIGNED FOR TEMPERATURES OF -10° TO 32° F.

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- 2 Outside Pockets
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- Flap Under Zipper to Prevent "Cold Spots"
- Zippered Sleeve Pocket with Pencil Holder



Choose: Black or Sage Green Outer Shell Color.
 Sizes: S, M, L and XL.
 \$97.25/each
 Item #C-550



USAF Flight Jacket

These flight jackets are issued to military fliers and are designated Type MA1 for Intermediate Cold. (This means that it is the medium weight jacket, designed for comfort in a temperature zone of about 20° to 55°F) Look for the military designation, sizes and stock numbers inside the left pocket. The outer shell and lining are 100% nylon making the jacket completely wind and waterproof. The interlining is 100% polyester fiberfill for the highest degree of warmth per ounce. This jacket is reversible, outside in your choice of either sage green or blue and the inside is survival orange. It features: two hip pockets outside as well as inside, sewn pen and pencil holders plus zippered easy access storage pocket in the left sleeve. This a snappy, convenient, warm, fully functional jacket and it happens to be the latest fashion trend.

Specify:

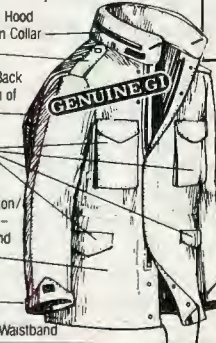
- Sage Green or Black Shell
- Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL (Regular Lengths Only) ... ITEM #C-500 \$54.95/each

Field Jacket - Type M65

In one form or another, this jacket has been the military workhorse for over 40 years and is still going strong.

The field jacket is designed for 3 season wear. In winter you can button in the liner (see below) or wear a vest or heavy sweater under it.

- Lightweight Hood Concealed in Collar
- Epaulets
- Gusseted Back for Freedom of Movement
- 4 Huge Outside Pockets
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Watch Cap - 100% Wool -

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M65 Liner

designed to be buttoned into the M65 Field Jacket. These liners are lightweight, polyester-fiberfilled, and very warm. Order same size as your field jacket. Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL Item #C-475 \$19.95/ea.

Knit Face Mask



Masks are lightweight non-itch, non-allergic; 100% stretch acrylic woven in a bulky knit. Maximum protection from wind and cold.

Ballaclava (One Hole) Face Mask



Knit Face Mask

- 3 holes for maximum protection.
- Choose:
 - Black or Olive Drab (OD) Green ... ITEM #N-390 ... \$5.95/each.
 - Camouflage (Reverses to bright orange) ... ITEM #N-390 ... \$6.95/each.

Ballaclava (One Hole) Face Mask

One hole accommodates eyeglasses or other equipment.
 Black ... ITEM #N-395 ... \$5.95/each.



Special Forces Green Beret

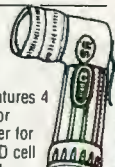
Jaunty and daring and classy - like the professional's who wear them. These are official regulation berets of 100% vat dyed wool and meeting all military specs. Made expressly for us by the prime government contractor. Also available Official headgear for:

- Green #H-425
- Maroon #H-430
- Black #H-435
- Red #H-440

 Sizes - 6 7/8 to 7 3/4
 (Not sure of head size? Tell us how many inches around your head where you wear your hat. We'll send the right one) ... \$14.95/each.

Angle Head Flashlite

This is the heavy duty plastic flashlight issued to all military units. The flashlight is waterproof, non-glare and features 4 different lenses which can be easily installed or removed. It can clip onto the belt or suspender for hands free operation; operates on 2 standard D cell batteries and comes complete with a spare bulb. Brand new, sold in the GI box ... \$14.95/each.



Black Commando Dog Tag Set

(A Kaufman's Exclusive): 2 GI stainless steel tags specially treated to be non-glare flat black plus 2 black (4" and 24") ball chains ... #X-675 \$6.00/set.

Regulation GI Dog Tags

set of 2 stainless steel tags and 2 stainless steel chains (4" and 24") Item #X-670 \$4.00/set. Want us to print them? WE'LL PRINT ANYTHING up to 6 lines and 15 spaces per line.
 Printing ... Item #X-665 ... only \$1.50 per tag (\$3.00/set).

Dog Tag Silencers

black, non-glare rubber bumpers for tags Item #X-650 \$1.95/pair.

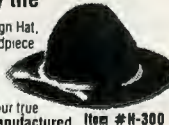
Ranger Combat Cap - Woodland Camouflage

latest Army issue. This winterweight cap features lined flaps which can fold out to keep your ears warm and tucked into the hat when the weather's balmy. Sizes run small. Also available in Olive Drab (OD) Green. Item #N-270. Sizes: 7, 7-1/4, 7-1/2, 7-3/4 ... \$8.50/each.



Drill Instructor/Smokey the Bear Hat

Formally called the Campaign Hat, this is a really fine quality pressed felt headpiece. A hat with character. No one who wears it escapes a personality change. An uncontrollable urge to shout orders or heap abuses, pursue flammers or write traffic tickets. Let your true or wistful self be heard. Commercially manufactured to exacting specs. Sizes 6-7/8 to 7-3/4. Item #N-300 \$23.95/each.



Genuine Leather Chin Strap

Item #N-305 \$2.95/each.

Acorn Hat Cord

(as shown) Item #N-310 \$8.95/each. (Specify color: silver, gold metallic, black/gold, metallic, yellow, red or light blue).

CAMOUFLAGE

Commando Camouflage Headnet - Spandoffage

Expandable camouflage mesh fits comfortably on any size head. Cool in summer, warm in winter, this revolutionary new mesh material can be cut (but will not unravel) to form eye-holes for the comfort of eyeglass wearers. Choose: Woodland Camouflage, Desert Camouflage or Solid Black ... Item #Q-275 \$5.95/each.



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Each metal tube contains 2 colors of facepaint which can be easily removed with soap and water. Current military issue. Choose: Woodland Camo (green & tan); desert camo (light green & sand); snow camo (white & tan) ... Item #Q-280 \$3.00/tube.

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I WAS THERE

by Dave Bray

Air Cav Rescue



WE were bivouacked outside the runway fence at Camp Holloway's airfield near Pleiku — once again working the Ia Drang Valley area to the south in search of more North Vietnamese regulars to pick a fight with — when the 1/9th Cav pulled off an attack and a rescue that would have made a movie director blush with shame had he expected the public to believe such a thing could really happen.

As one of the H-13 Scout pilots for the 1/9th, I had already flown my morning missions and had an entire day to kill in the dust and wind of that day in March of '66.

I couldn't help but think of Kipling's line in "Gunga Din" — "Where the 'eat would make your bloody eyebrows crawl," as I walked across the airfield to the sparsely stocked Camp Holloway PX.

There was damned little to buy in the place, but I picked up something or other just to be doing something and entered the check-out line.

Behind me in line was CWO-3 George Sabens, one of our 1/9th gunship pilots. He asked me if I was going to buy myself any film, and I told him "no," so he asked if I would buy a couple of rolls of 35mm for him. Supplies being so short in the PX, film was rationed.

I did so and we walked out together. George was on the maintenance de-

Huey gunship, with tree sticking out of nose section, extracted from crash site just minutes after hitting the ground.

Photo: Barrie Turner

partment's doodle-bug motor scooter and offered me a ride back to our bivouac area and I accepted.

As he dropped me off in front of my pup tent, several Hueys were running up and someone was yelling for him to "saddle up." Since this was not unusual in the 1/9th, and since no one was calling for me, I decided to crawl into my tent and try to sleep the heat away. Glancing at my watch, I could see it was exactly 1400 hours.

Using my flight jacket as a pillow, I tossed and turned for what seemed like an eternity — but could not sleep. The dust filtering into my overheated tent sandpapered my eyes, and I finally decided to get up and get some air.

It seemed like I had been inside a long time, but a glance at my watch showed that it was only 1430 hours. My "nap" had taken exactly 30 minutes.

As I left the tent and stood upright, a jeep was slowly passing a few feet in front of me. George Sabens was in the right seat. In back sat Michael Johnson, his co-pilot. Both were liberally splattered with iodine and had many cuts and scratches.

"Whoa!" I held up my hand. "What happened to you guys?"

The jeep stopped and George

pointed across our encampment to where a Chinook was just setting down a heavily damaged gunship with a small tree embedded in its nose. Shaking his head, George, who was one of the oldest people in B Troop at age 40, told his story.

When George had dropped me off at my tent 30 minutes earlier, WO Johnson already had his gunship started and running up. Two of the Scout Pilots, Captain Fritz and Neil Weems, had spotted a company of NVA regulars in a large stand of small trees a few miles to the east of us — just north of Route 19 and west of Mang-Yang pass.

Doing what the aircrews of the 1/9th did whenever and wherever they saw an enemy soldier, Fritz and Weems called for the gunships and the infantry of our "Blue" platoon and immediately went into the attack, knowing that the only way to "maintain visual contact at all costs" was to make Charlie eat dirt while waiting for the arrival of the gunships and infantry.

Just a few minutes from our bivouac site, the location was close enough that the departing Hueys could see Weems and Fritz making their firing runs almost as soon as they were airborne.

Leading the gunrun, Sabens was on the rockets while Johnson was on the flight controls of the UH-1B. Carrying a total of 14 rockets and over 6,000 rounds of 7.62mm for the quad M60s, the chopper was almost max-gross as far as lifting power went.

In an identical B model behind them, CWO-2 Barrie Turner and CWO-2 Doug Tucker were also putting their rocket and flex gun fire into the enemy position as they dove at nearly 150 miles per hour in their gun run.

Suddenly, Sabens realized that they were at too high of a sink rate, and he took over the flight controls in an effort to pull them out of the dive. But the B model went nose first into the stand of 12- to 15-foot tall saplings.

Seeing this, Turner and Tucker broke off and watched as their sister aircraft bounced 150 feet back into the air and went backwards before once again crashing to the ground.

"George, it's been a good 40 years," was all that Sabens could think as he hurdled backwards through the air, expecting the chopper to explode upon impact.

For some reason the 600 pounds of JP4 aboard did not explode as the chopper crashed to the ground a second time and rolled over on its side.

After a long second, Sabens and Johnson, all tangled up in belted M60 ammo, realized they were alive, as were the two crewmen in the back.

Continued on page 74

RUGER REVOLVERS

Ruger has expanded its successful GP-100 revolver series with two new stainless steel models — a 4-inch, fixed-sight .357 Magnum and a 3-inch, 5-shot SP-101 .38 Special.

Like their predecessors, all internal parts are installed either through the top or bottom of the frame, thereby eliminating side plates. Both feature thick frames with extra width in those critical areas which support the barrel.

The grip portion of the frame holds compressible, rubber wraparound grips with polished Goncalvo Alves panel inserts. In addition to providing structural reinforcement, these wood panel inserts permit the hand to easily shift into proper firing position.

In the Ruger tradition, both the mainspring and trigger guard latch are massive coils. At 28 ounces, the SP-101 is Ruger's smallest and lightest double-action revolver yet. The plain-Jane GP-100 weighs in at 38 ounces. Suggested retail for SP-101 is \$370 while the GP-100 sells for \$390.

Contact Sturm, Ruger and Co., Inc., Dept. SOF, Lacey Place, Southport, CT 06490.

SCORPION

Though unabashedly designed for plinking fun, the slick little TEC-22 Scorpion is also adequate for potting small game. Blowback-operated and firing from the closed-bolt position, this semiauto pistol bears a quite intentional resemblance to the famous Czech Vz61 Scorpion machine pistol.

Weighing 29 ounces with an overall length of 11.2 inches, the TEC-22 Scorpion can be comfortably fired from the Weaver position. Although the barrel is only 4 inches long, accuracy potential is excellent — due in no small measure to the generous 6.5-inch sight radius. The front sight has a round post with protective ears, while the rear sight is a large, open square-notch design.

This pistol's light weight is largely a consequence of the receiver, which is fabricated from extremely tough 30-percent, glass-filled black nylon.

Any Ruger-type 10/22 magazine can be used in the TEC-22 Scorpion, including the 50-round Mitchell Arms magazine. A 30-round magazine, manufactured by Ram-Line®, Inc., is included. A storage compartment in the pistol grip holds ammunition and/or cleaning equipment.

Barrels can be changed by the

ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

by Tom Slizewski

TOP GUNS



operator. An optional barrel with threaded muzzle nut is available for \$29.95. TEC-22 Scorpion will accept a muzzle brake and replica sound suppressor. Suggested retail price complete with one magazine and hard-plastic carrying case is \$172.95.

Contact Intratec, Dept. SOF, 12405 S.W. 130th Street, Miami, FL 33186; phone: (305) 232-1821.

HIGH POWER

Its origin goes back to John M.

Browning's last pistol patent — applied for on 28 June 1923. After his death in 1926, *Fabrique Nationale d'Armes de Guerre* in Herstal (Liège), Belgium, directed Dieudonné Saive to modify Browning's design, and by 1935 the first *Grande Puissance* (High Power) pistols were delivered. After a production series of more than 1.5 million, FN has recently announced its decision to cease production. Fortunately, for those of us who still admire this classic single-action 9mm Parabellum pistol with its



Shown with optional threaded barrel.

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One look tells you the new TEC-22 Scorpion is hot. Dramatic. Innovative. But its best feature may be the one you don't see.

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And full of features—only 3 component parts, a 30 round magazine that can be "jungle clipped" to 60, ambidextrous safety and operating lever, storage grip.

"(Intratec) makes a gun that doesn't cost an arm and a leg, yet functions with impeccable reliability."

—Jerry Ahern,
Petersen's Handguns

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INTRATEC

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large-capacity, 13-round magazine, its continued availability remains assured by licensed production by foreign concerns such as Argentina's state-owned military complex, *Direccion General de Fabricaciones Militares* (DGFM).

Their version features a finish of baked enamel over phosphate and black plastic grip panels. The fixed sights consist of a rounded front blade and an open square-notch rear sight. Trigger pull weight on our test specimen was a fairly crisp seven pounds.



Construction and operation of this locked-breech, short-recoil operated Argentine High Power are identical to those produced in Belgium. Unlike Browning's M1911 Colt design, there is no pivoting link under the High Power's barrel. Instead, a more substantial lug on the barrel's underside has been cut with a forward and upward sloping camway. As the barrel and slide travel rearward in recoil, this "barrel nose" strikes a cam in the frame that unlocks it from the slide and terminates its forward movement.

To avoid metal fatigue in the barrel lug, the forward contour of the cam slot was squared off to direct recoiling forces up and into the barrel itself. This early pre-World War II modification has been retained in the Argentine version. A series of cost-effective alterations introduced by FN, principal of which was a visible extractor with roll pin and spring, have also been incorporated into the DGFM High Power.

Magazines do not drop freely from the frame when the magazine release button is depressed. That the feed ramp needs a bit of polishing, and the trigger exhibits minor backlash are the only small criticisms, and ones easily corrected by any competent pistolsmith.

With a suggested retail of only \$450, complete with one magazine, the Argentine High Power delivers FN quality for a Latin price.

Contact Armscorp of America, Inc., Dept. SOF, 4424 John Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21227; phone (301) 247-6200. ☒

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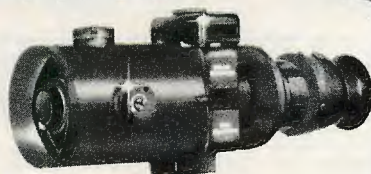
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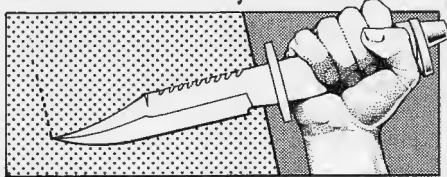
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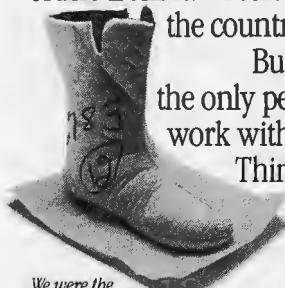


One firefighter said our Thinsulate® insulation was so good he couldn't tell his boots were on fire.

leather tanned black inside and out (that way it doesn't show white at the

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And now we're even taking orders from raw recruits. All over the country.



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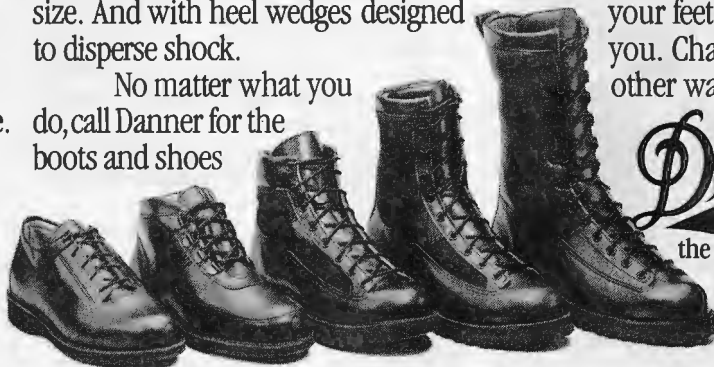
We did, and we now offer the full range of service footwear, including the only walking shoes



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WEAPONS AND TACTICS OF THE SOVIET ARMY. By David C. Isby. Jane's Publishing Company, Dept. SOF, 115 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10003. 1988. 516 pages. \$45.00. Review by G.B. Crouse.



DAVID Isby's *Weapons and Tactics of the Soviet Army*, first published in 1980, is the recognized source on all things related to the Soviet army. However, recent political events, the

war in Afghanistan, and the development of new weapon systems and technologies have all led to changes in the Red Army in the last eight years. Accordingly Isby, who follows these events closely, has thoroughly revised and updated his book for its 1988 edition.

Isby, author of Jane's *Armies of NATO's Central Front*, *Russia's War in Afghanistan* and *Ten Million Bayonets*, is an acknowledged expert on Soviet military affairs, has served as a legislative assistant on Capitol Hill and as an adviser on defense and foreign affairs in Washington, and has contributed countless articles on the Soviet military and the war in Afghanistan to *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*, *Jane's Defence Weekly* and other professional military publications.

Recognizing the interrelationship that exists between weapons and their users, Isby covers both in depth — start-

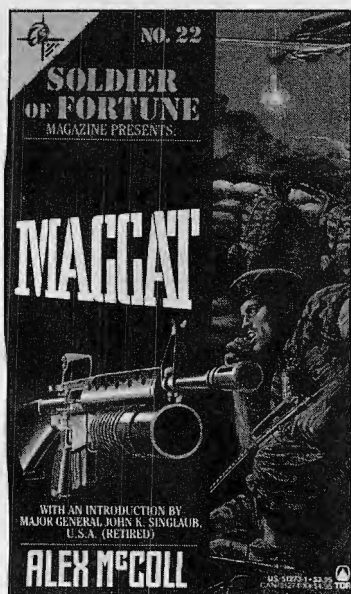
ing with assault rifles and infantry squads and progressing up through armored fighting vehicles and offensive tank tactics. Nothing in between is omitted. Artillery, air defense weapons, nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, helicopters, infantry combat vehicles, signals and electronic gear and combat support vehicles all receive their own chapters.

Elite organizations such as reconnaissance, airborne, air assault and special operations forces and their unique equipment are all dealt with in great detail, as are Soviet tactics in the Third World and Afghanistan. In short, nothing is left out, and although Gorbachev's announced reductions of 500,000 troops and 10,000 tanks are too recent to have been considered, Isby's book remains the most accurate, complete and authoritative guide available on the Soviet military machine.



IN REVIEW

MACCAT. By Alex McColl. *Soldier of Fortune Magazine Adventure Books*, published by Tor Books, Dept. SOF, 49 W. 24th St., New York, NY 10010. 1988. Paperback. \$3.95 (plus \$1.00 postage and handling). Review by Major General John K. Singlaub, U.S.A. (Ret.)



HOW do you write an unclassified account of something as sensitive and secret as the Studies and Observations

Group of Military Assistance Command Vietnam? You do what Colonel Alex McColl has done. You write a novel, about a fictitious Major Charlie Hamilton in a fictitious organization called MACV Concept Analysis Team (MACCAT) for short. You switch around the names and places, reshuffle the organizational diagram, leave out mention of the really sensitive activities and try to keep in the color and flavor of what was going on by portraying typical incidents and episodes in the exciting and sometimes bizarre life that we led.

For former SOG soldiers, **MACCAT** will bring back vivid memories of adventures so strange that you sometimes wonder whether they really happened, even though you were there in the middle of them. For everyone else, here at last is a series of vivid and accurate portrayals of a few of our diverse activities, ranging from tough straightforward infantry battles, through stealthy recon patrols, to the Byzantine intricacies of what went on in that strange grey area where politics, combat operations and secret intelligence overlapped.

McColl knows what he's talking about. He served under me as a major in OP-35 of SOG for a good part of 1968. OP-35 was the outfit that ran the cross-border operations into Laos and Cambodia. McColl was involved, among other things, in setting up the



Captain Alex McColl, while serving as a District Senior Adviser, Republic of Vietnam, 1967. McColl was later promoted to major and assigned to MACV-SOG. Involved with *Soldier of Fortune Magazine* since its inception, McColl joined the staff in July 1982 and currently serves as Special Projects Director. Photo: Alex McColl

recon team leaders' school at Long Thanh, in a project that planted booby-trapped ammunition into enemy supply caches, and in putting wire taps on enemy telephone lines in Laos. He also served as District Senior Adviser in one of the less desirable corners of II Corps, which was the subject of his previous novel, "Valley of Peril."

McColl's experience has enabled him to produce a book that rates rather well above average as a lively and readable adventure story. ✕

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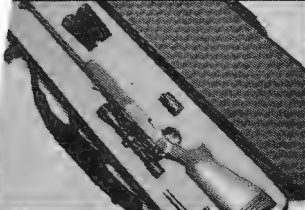
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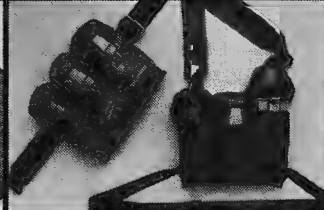
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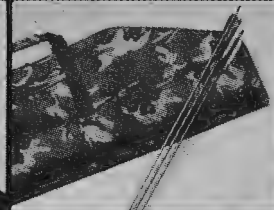
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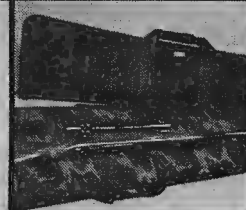
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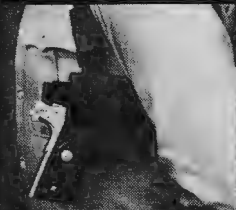


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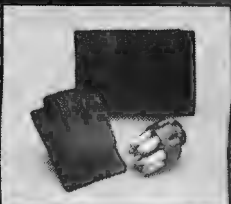
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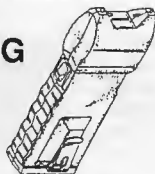
ZAPPER STUN GUN



50,000 volts of power!
This quality stun gun will instantly "scramble" any assailant's nervous system causing immediate, but temporary paralysis! By simply touching your attacker anywhere, he will drop to the ground a helpless blob of "jelly." Effective even through many layers of clothing. Operates on a regular 9-volt battery. Measures 6 x 2 x 3/4 inches.

#A007.....\$49.95

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#A008.....\$59.95

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This is one of our most popular models. It features a unique curved handgrip. This design protects you from being attacked from behind. It has a full 50,000 volts of power. The state-of-the-art micro-chip technology assures you against activator switch burn out and loss of voltage. The "Defender" is powered by a normal 9-volt alkaline battery or a rechargeable 9-volt. Comes with a handling strap. The "Defender" measures 6.5 x 2 x 3/4 inches.

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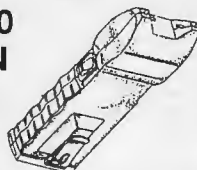
MINI ZAPPER STUN GUN



The smallest, lightest stun gun available. This gun weighs only a few ounces and measures less than 4 inches, but it packs a full 50,000 volts of biting, stunning power. New space age technology has enabled us to produce this full-strength stun gun in a small package about the size of a normal beeper. Comes with a handy belt clip. Uses a 9-volt battery. Measures 4 x 2.3 x 1.3.

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X8000 STUN GUN



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by Captain C. Shore
Foreword by Peter R. Senich



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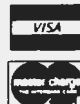
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COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

by Ronald E. Dodd

Surveillance Techniques

HEADING out on another run, the drug dealer's black limo quickly pulls away from the curb. Three car lengths back, a white Ferrari pulls from the curb and starts a mobile surveillance. Sound absurd? It is. But almost nightly, a defender of TV justice pulls a surveillance in this manner and never gets burned. In the real world, if one surveillance in 10 can be successfully completed, the team is either very lucky or very good.

This article will outline different types of surveillances, their purpose, desirable qualities for surveillance officers, and how to prepare for and successfully complete a productive surveillance. Because every situation will vary, this article is not gospel but a comprehensive overview from which you may draw as you formulate your own surveillance techniques. And as you plan, always figure in a disaster factor. Remember Murphy's Law, because you can bet your last speed loader that what can go wrong *will* go wrong.

Surveillance is a necessary facet of law enforcement. When used correctly it can be extremely useful, but when used incorrectly it can bring negative results and embarrassment to your department.

Some agencies have specialized units for surveillance. Just as traffic division writes tickets, these units handle all surveillances. There are very few smaller departments, however, that have the luxury of a separate surveillance unit. Some large agencies have specialized surveillance units that are larger than the manpower of some small departments. What is the answer for a small department, or a large department with a small budget?

Like many other situations in law enforcement, departments can benefit if they join together to form a metro surveillance team. Maybe one department has night vision equipment, another department has video equipment and a third has listening equipment. In this case, the best solution is for such departments to pool their resources and work together. This is a common practice and can work for the mutual benefit of all agencies involved.

Why is a surveillance conducted? Specifically to:

- Obtain evidence that would not be accessible through other investigative techniques;
- Obtain probable cause for search warrants;
- Establish the veracity of informants;
- Obtain information which may be used later in an interrogation;
- Obtain detailed information about a



suspect's activities, routines and locations frequented by him;

- Locate suspects by watching known acquaintances and hangouts;
- Catch suspects in the commission of a crime.

Although there are countless crimes that may call for a surveillance, the three most common are kidnapping, extortion and narcotics trafficking. Of these three, by far the most demanding is kidnapping, followed by extortion and then narcotics trafficking. Kidnapping calls for a non-expendable surveillance — one which cannot be compromised at any cost. Extortion cases will fall into the non-expendable category when lives are involved. Narcotics surveillance will usually fall into the expendable category. Most narcotics dealers are creatures of habit, which is often how they are discovered in the

Certain telltale signs virtually guarantee this vehicle has been sitting here for some time. A suspect will wonder why. Wouldn't you? Author tells how to avoid such stakeout mistakes. Photos: Tom Slizewski

first place. Thus on certain occasions an expendable surveillance may be just what is called for. The surveillance officer may lure the dealer into making a mistake.

The most common types of surveillance usually are mobile, where the officer or surveillance team will be moving with the target of the surveillance. Officers may utilize an automobile, aircraft, boat, bicycle, motorcycle or any other form of transportation necessary to successfully complete the surveillance. In a stationary surveillance there will be continuous observation of the target, usually from a fixed point. A typical surveillance mission, however, will often be a combination of both.

In surveillance, a prerequisite characteristic of vehicles, personnel and equipment is that they be ordinary in appearance and appropriate for the locality. Take for example the white Ferrari. While it looks good on TV,

ON WATCH

Ronald E. Dodd is a detective lieutenant with many years in the field for the Red Bank Police Department in Tennessee. This is his first article for *Soldier of Fortune*.



how far could such a vehicle follow you before it became quite obvious? Most criminals are not stupid (just the ones that get caught), so don't make it easy for them. Dress for the area in which the surveillance will be working. If the

surveillance is in the most wretched part of town, surveillance personnel should not dress in three-piece suits. If the surveillance vehicle just yells "POLICE," guess who is going to be the first one to notice. Many car lots will

loan vehicles to police officers for surveillance needs. Try to pick out the most common-looking vehicle on the lot, with the most common color. Stay away from loud, flashy vehicles. They will only draw attention to the surveillance.

A surveillance officer must have the ability to remain calm and inconspicuous under pressure. On your first surveillance you will think you have been made before you cover a block. Don't be intimidated because the suspect keeps looking over his shoulder. He naturally is going to be nervous — he is the violator. Be creative: wear clothes that can be reversed for a quick change of appearance, keep sunglasses of different types in your pocket, wear hats. Don't hesitate to use these if you think the surveillance is about to be compromised. Have a logical cover story prepared in the event you come face to face with the suspect or are challenged.

Try to pick out ordinary-looking officers for surveillance personnel. If the surveillance is in an all black neighborhood and the only officer available is white, consider whether it is wise to initiate the surveillance or wait until a black officer is available. The same rule applies to clothes as vehicles; stay away from flashy items. Check all background information that can be obtained. What type of neighborhood will the surveillance team be working in? How do the locals dress? What language do they speak? Learn to be a chameleon. Learn how to play a role. Be like the area. Know what type of restaurants are in the area. Make sure you haven't busted the owner on a health violation.

Know the type of vehicles the suspect will be driving. If he is driving a Corvette, you don't want to be driving a VW bus. Do not always rely on vehicle registration plates, as they can be readily changed. Try to anticipate the route that the suspect will take, but be careful and not try to second-guess the suspect. You may end up with egg on your face. Make sure your weapon is well concealed; telltale bulges under your coat will give you away.

The surveillance officer will not always have access to camera equipment or a recorder, so the officer should be trained in the skills of observation and memory. What the officer observes in the blink of an eye may be crucial to the surveillance. Once in a secure position, the surveillance officer should record everything that has happened on a standard log form. This record will be subject to the

Continued on page 79



SOF SIDEARMS

After its inception in 1935, the .357 Magnum reigned for 20 years as the world's most powerful handgun cartridge. Sturdy, reliable and economical revolvers, such as the Taurus Model 66, assure its continued popularity well into the foreseeable future.

BULLS FROM BRAZIL

Taurus .357 Series Keeps Pace With The Best

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

ONE of the few handgun cartridges to derive its numerical designation from its actual bullet diameter, the .357 Magnum was introduced in 1935 by Smith & Wesson. During the early 1930s, Colonel Douglas B. Wesson of Smith & Wesson and the legendary Philip B. Sharpe conducted experiments with various maximum loads to develop a high-velocity revolver round suitable for hunting purposes. Using a Smith & Wesson .38/44 Outdoorsman, they found it to be capable of withstanding what were at that time phenomenal pressures for a revolver (35,000 to 38,000 psi). This led to a

proposed new cartridge and revolver designed jointly by Smith & Wesson, DuPont, Hercules and Winchester. The case length was purposely made 1/10 of an inch longer than that of the .38 Special to preclude use of the .357 Magnum in revolvers chambered for the lower-pressure ammunition.

It remained the most powerful handgun cartridge in the world until introduction of the .44 Magnum in 1955. After more than 50 years, interest in the .357 Magnum shows little sign of diminishing. Although largely overshadowed by the recent widespread adoption of large-capacity, double-

action 9mm Parabellum pistols throughout the U.S. law enforcement community, many departments still cling to their .357 Magnums, and its popularity in civilian circles as a self-defense and hunting cartridge continues unabated.

Forjas Taurus, S.A., in Sao Paulo, Brazil, manufactures a series of .357 Magnum revolvers priced considerably under their U.S. competition. They bear no more than cosmetic similarity to their Smith & Wesson ancestors. The Model 66 series, available with either 3-, 4- or 6-inch barrels, is furnished in standard blue, satin nickel or stainless steel. Fully adjustable rear sights are standard. A version with a full-length barrel shroud, called the Model 669, was introduced in 1988 (blue or stainless steel with either a 4- or 6-inch barrel). Those seeking only fixed rear sights can obtain the Model 65 in blue or satin nickel with either a 3- or 4-inch barrel. They all loosely resemble the Smith & Wesson K-frame series.

We chose a stainless steel Model 66 with a 6-inch barrel and a satin nickel specimen with a 4-inch tube for our test and evaluation. Suggested retail prices are \$297 and \$244.50 respectively. All revolvers in this series have mill-finished, drop-forged frames.

Our 6-inch test specimen was fabricated from 416 stainless steel. The top of the barrel and frame have a glass-beaded, non-

glare matte finish. The remaining surfaces on the barrel, frame and cylinder carry a moderately high-gloss polish that rivals anything produced in the United States. With the exception of some unsightly scratches on each side of the front sight blade, all visible milling marks have been removed. The satin nickel specimen is just about flawless in this regard. The fit of all metal and wood components is excellent.

Cylinder-to-forcing-cone gap is 0.003 inch on the 4-inch Model 66 and 0.006 inch on the 6-inch specimen (0.003 to 0.008 inch is the generally accepted tolerance range). Fore-and-aft cylinder play is minimal on both revolvers, but the lateral play is almost excessive on both. The cylinders hold six rounds, and rotation is to the left (counterclockwise). The ejector rod does not quite permit complete ejection of the empty cases. The cylinder latch is patterned after that of Smith & Wesson and must be pushed forward to swing out the cylinder.

The barrels are equipped with a full-length solid rib and an integral ejector shroud. In 1984 Taurus stopped pinning barrels to the frames after perfecting a method of precision threading that eliminated this requirement. All barrels are five-groove with a right-hand twist of one turn in 18¾ inches. The 4-inch Model 66 has an overall length of 9.5 inches and weighs 35 ounces. Overall length of the 6-inch Model 66 is 11.5 inches with a weight of 38.5 ounces.

A guide-in-coil-type mainspring is set into the square-butt frame. The wide, target-type triggers have six grooves (speed freaks can have them easily ground away). Of far greater importance are the trigger-pull weights. Single-action pull weight on our 4-inch specimen was a rather gritty 3.75 pounds. The double-action pull weight was an entirely reasonable 9.5 pounds with absolutely no loading at the end of the stroke. The 6-inch stainless steel Model 66 was exactly a half pound heavier in both single- and double-action.

Mounted in the frame, the floating firing pin must be struck by the now ubiquitous transfer bar, which, in turn, receives the hammer's full impact. Should the finger slip off the trigger while the hammer is falling forward, the transfer bar will drop downward, out of the hammer's path, and the firing pin will not be driven forward.

The sight system holds no surprises for U.S. revolver shooters. Both front sights are of the serrated ramp type. The front sight blade on the stainless steel Model 66 has a red plastic insert of dubious value. Rear sights consist of a micrometer click type, open square notch, with white outline on the stainless steel version. Turn the windage adjustment screw counterclockwise to move the rear sight and the point of impact to the right.

All Taurus grips are rather crudely checkered and fabricated from Brazilian Guajuvira, an attractive tropical hardwood. Each grip panel carries the Taurus escutcheon. Our stainless steel Model 66 is equipped with large, oversize target stocks in a



Two examples of the excellent Taurus Model 66 series of revolvers: stainless steel 6-inch and satin nickel 4-inch.

Smith & Wesson configuration. These stocks position the hand lower on the revolver and provide more consistent finger-to-trigger alignment. The 4-inch Model 66 has standard grip panels which exactly match the contour of the square-butt frame.

After it was first introduced in 1935, the

.357 Magnum cartridge was reported to deliver a muzzle velocity of 1,510 fps when driven out of the Smith & Wesson 8¾-inch barrel. By the 1950s, the U.S. Commercial Standard was 1,450 fps. Original factory ammunition was provided with only three bullet types: a round nose (RN) with a metal point, a solid lead semi-wadcutter (SWC) and a conical-shaped, armor-piercing bullet

Continued on page 70

TAURUS M66 SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber:357 Magnum.
Operation:	Six-shot revolver. Single- and double-action. Internal transfer bar safety. Floating firing pin.
Weight, empty:	3-inch barrel, 32.5 ounces; 4-inch barrel, 35 ounces; 6-inch barrel, 38.5 ounces.
Length, overall:	3-inch barrel, 8.5 inches; 4-inch barrel, 9.5 inches; 6-inch barrel, 11.5 inches.
Barrel:	Five-groove with a right-hand twist of one turn in 18¾ inches. Integral shroud and solid rib.
Barrel length:	3, 4 and 6 inches.
Stocks:	Checkered Brazilian Guajuvira. Target or service configurations.
Sights:	Long serrated ramp-type front with red plastic insert on stainless steel versions. Micrometer click-type rear with open square notch; adjustable for windage and elevation zero; stainless steel versions equipped with white outline.
Finishes:	Blued, satin nickel or stainless steel.
Price:	Blued, \$234.00; satin nickel, \$244.50; stainless steel, \$297.00.
Manufacturer:	Forjas Taurus, S.A., Dept. SOF, Av. Victor Manzini 450, Sao Paulo, Brazil, CEP 04745.
U.S. distributor:	Taurus International Firearms, Dept. SOF, 4563 SW 71st Avenue, P.O. Box 558567, Ludlam Branch, Miami, FL 33155; phone (305) 662-2529.
T&E Summary:	Sturdy and reliable — with a price that should appeal to all aficionados of the wheelgun.

SONS OF SAM

Man-Portable Missiles Put Sting on Chopper Warfare

by David Isby

MIL Mi-24 and Mi-25 Hinds — the big, ugly helicopters that became the symbol of Soviet aggression in the Third World, much as Stuka became the symbol of Nazi Germany at its height—have fallen on hard times.

Hinds, and the Soviet military technology of which they were a product, seemed ascendant in the 1970s and early 1980s. In the hands of the Soviets in Afghanistan and their friends elsewhere (Cubans, Angolans, Nicaraguans, Ethiopians, Vietnamese), Hinds struck hard against their guerrilla opponents. Today, things have changed.

In a turnabout that may force large changes in international relations, by 1986-87 Hinds were no longer the rulers of the air over Afghanistan, Nicaragua, or Angola. A major reason for this is the fact that the Hind is now threatened by man-portable, surface-to-air missiles (SAMs).

The SAM itself is not new. Soviet-built SA-7 Grail heat-seeking, man-portable SAMs were used in the early 1970s in the Middle East, Rhodesia, Guinea and South Vietnam, but since the mid-1980s the impact of SAMs has become greater than it ever was in the previous decade.

Helicopters like the Hind are vital in counterinsurgency operations. They provide responsive, accurate firepower, while artillery requires forward firebases, and fixed-wing aircraft often show up too late and end up destroying everything in the general vicinity of the target (not good for winning hearts and minds). Transport helicopters are vital for mobility, especially if you are fighting in a Third World country without a good road network. General Sir Walter Walker, commander of British Commonwealth forces on Borneo during the conflict with Indonesia in the 1960s, said, "a battalion with six Wessex helicopters was worth more to me than a brigade without them." With different helicopters, the quote could easily belong to any Soviet general in Afghanistan.

Limiting the use of helicopters in a counterinsurgency war gives the guerrillas a powerful, possibly decisive advantage. But the impact of man-portable SAMs is by no means limited to guerrilla wars. Both sides count heavily on their helicopters in case of a future war in Europe. NATO sees antitank helicopters as supplementing the weapons along the line of contact, blunting the Soviet armored spearheads as well as acting as part of mobile reserves, slowing down Soviet penetrations until reserves can counterattack. Helicopters are also needed to strike behind the *Soviet front lines*, denying them

the advantage of deciding the time and place for battle. For the Soviets, helicopters are needed to provide "air accompaniment," the firepower for deep penetrations of NATO positions, while transport helicopters will in-

BELOW: Although Redeye is leaving U.S. service, it will remain in use by contras and U.S. allies while supplies remain. This is Danish version of Redeye, the Hamlet. Photo: Danish Ministry of Defense



MAN-PORTABLE SAM PERFORMANCE

Name (Nationality)	Weight (kg)	Range (km)	Altitude (m)	Guidance	Aspect
Stinger (US)	15.1	5	4,800	IR	all
Javelin (GB)	13	5.6	?	SACLOS	all
Blowpipe (GB)	11	3+	2,000	CLOS	all
RBS 70 (SW)	15	5	3,000	laser	all
Mistral (FR)	17	6	3,000	IR	all
Ain Sakr (EG)	15	4.4	2,400	IR	all
Redeye (US)	13	3	1,500	IR	rear
SA-7 (SU)	9.2	3.7	3,000	IR	rear
SA-7b (SU)	10	5.6	4,300	IR	rear
SA-14 (SU)	9.9	6	5,000	IR	all
SA-16 (SU)	12.5	6	5,000	IR	all
HN-5A (PRC)	?	4	2,500	IR	rear

Weight is missile, rather than launch unit. Guidance: IR=infrared, CLOS=command line of sight (thumb trigger), SACLOS=semi-automatic command line of sight (automatic cross-hairs).

AFGHAN ALLY

David Isby, frequent contributor to *Soldier of Fortune* and renowned expert on the Soviet military, has authored *Jane's Weapons and Tactics of the Soviet Army* and *Armies of NATO's Central Front*, as well as *Russia's War in Afghanistan*.



Soviet Mi-24 Hind-D readied for flight.
Photo: DoD

sert troops to help create the "front in the enemy rear" and provide resupply.

In Europe, both sides would meet more intense opposition than in any of the conflicts of the 1980s. But the evidence of SAM successes in 1986-87 throughout the world certainly raises questions about the survivability of the helicopter — and those who go into battle in them — in any future conflict. Is the helicopter in danger of being driven from the battlefield by the man-portable SAM?

SAM Background

The idea for a man-portable SAM originated in the late 1950s, soon after air-to-air missiles became practical weapons. Today the United States, western Europe, the Soviet Union and an increasing number of other nations (most notably Egypt and China) produce a wide variety of SAMs.

The man-portable SAM is a difficult design compromise. It must be light if it is going to be carried by its gunner (although some, like the RBS-70 and Mistral, require a multi-man crew). This means that maximum weight should be in the 35-pound area. It must be cheap, because part of the reason you want such a weapon is so it can see widespread use. Yet it must be accurate

and lethal, because a Hind that has just been missed by a SAM is quite likely to turn very ugly indeed.

In the 1970s, man-portable SAMs were largely synonymous with the Soviet SA-7. Today, it is the U.S.-designed General Dynamics FIM-92A Stinger that poses the greatest challenge to the continued viability of air assault operations.

The Stinger was used in combat by the British Special Air Service (SAS) in the Falklands. Six missiles fired yielded only one Argentinian Pucara twin turboprop ground attack aircraft destroyed, due possibly to the fact that they were used by untrained gunners (the trained gunners having been lost in a helicopter accident before battle). The French in Chad have used Stingers to deter the Libyans from using their air power against Chadian forces, who, in turn, started to receive their own Stingers from the United States in 1987. While there was no hostile air action, Stingers were carried by the 82nd Airborne Division's air defense artillery troopers on Grenada in 1983.

All the versions of the Stinger that have been used in action are of the initial produc-

tion type. The current model, the Stinger-POST (Passive Optical Scanning Technique), is much more resistant to countermeasures than were its predecessors. While available for supply to the Afghan resistance, it has not yet been used.

The phenomenal success of the Stinger in Afghanistan has brought it, and the class of weapon it represents, to world attention. Less well known, but equally significant, was the successful use of the Stinger by UNITA guerrillas in Angola. The contras in Nicaragua received no Stingers, but have used the Stinger's predecessor, the U.S.-designed Redeye, and various versions of the SA-7, with good effect. These successes have raised the question: Has the man-portable SAM made the helicopter an endangered species in low intensity conflicts? Considering that the Stinger and the SA-7 are both just the bottom end of a whole range of SAMs, the question also remains: What about U.S. and Soviet helicopters in higher intensity conflicts? Can they possibly hope to survive?

The challenge to helicopter operations in Third World conflicts was most dramatically shown in Afghanistan. The Stinger exceeded the most optimistic expectations for its performance, achieving a peak kill rate of 68 percent. In the first few weeks of its use, the kill percentage was estimated at 70 percent: The first 10 missiles fired yielded six helicopters and a fighter-bomber shot down and a closed Jalalabad airfield. The first batch of 150 missiles, most of which went to the two *Hezbi-i-Islami* parties (the radical *Hezbi-i-Islami*, led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, and the Islamist *Hezbi-i-Islami* of Younis Khalis), were followed by a batch of 300 that went to all seven major parties and, later in 1987, another batch of 200. Over 250 Blowpipe missiles were also supplied. More than 150 aircraft and helicopters were destroyed in the first nine months of Stinger use. While the air war in Afghanistan had scarcely been cost-free previously (in 1986, U.S. Air Force Lieutenant General Leonard Peroots of the Defense Intelligence Agency reported the loss of 500 aircraft to the resistance throughout the war up to the introduction of the Stinger), it was the Stinger that caused the Soviets to lose control of the skies over Afghanistan, which apparently was the final seal on the Soviet decision to seek to end the war by non-military means.

In Angola, there are far fewer Stingers than in Afghanistan — annual U.S. aid to the resistance there has been only \$15 million and total number of Stingers supplied fewer than 100 rounds — but they still managed to account for a substantial number of downed fighter-bombers and helicopters. The Angolan resistance movement's (UNITA) president, Dr. Jonas Savimbi, reported the destruction of 37 communist aircraft in the first eight months of 1986, although this apparently included some destroyed by South African forces. A Stinger was probably used on 4 July 1987 to destroy a *Hip* near Bie, in central Angola, followed by a number of other helicopters. On 28 October 1987, a Stinger destroyed a Cuban-flown MiG-23 Flogger fighter-bomber. In late 1987, Dr. Savimbi said that the Stinger had neutralized communist air power on the battlefield. As for its accuracy, he said "with five missiles, I got five planes."

In Nicaragua, despite the lack of Stingers, the contras have managed to reduce the Sandinista battlefield advantage of air mobility, claiming 15 helicopters destroyed in 1987. The Sandinista commander of the Sixth Military Region, Lieutenant Colonel Salvatierra Rivera, admitted that the contras' SAMs forced his use of helicopters to be "cautious and well-planned." It certainly has changed the war from the days when the Hind



Swedish-built Bofors RBS-70 SAM. Large launch unit can be carried by three men but is usually mounted on light vehicle. Photo: David Isby



CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO MAN-PORTABLE SAMs

UNITED STATES: *Stinger*. Current world beater. Both standard Stinger and Stinger-POST (Passive Optical Scanning Technique) probably offer as good a capability as any man-portable SAM today. Able to engage targets from all angles. While it has been attacked by critics as overly complex, Afghans and Angolans have managed to use it effectively. As with all other man-portable SAMs, it consists of two basic elements:

gripstock, including the trigger and sights, and tube, containing one missile. It can also be mounted on helicopter as air-to-air missile. Currently being deployed by several U.S. allies.

UNITED STATES: *Redeye*. 1950s-technology infrared homing predecessor to Stinger must be seen as second-best today, although it can still be used effectively, as witnessed by the contras' use of them. It can usually only be used against aircraft moving away from the launcher, as it is a tail-chase weapon.

SOVIET UNION: *SA-7 Grail*. Basic Soviet version. It suffered from many

limitations — 5,000 were fired in 1973 Middle East War, resulting in two Israeli aircraft destroyed, two possible, and 28 damaged. Most easily defeated by countermeasures of any man-portable SAM. Check date on any round before using. Battery — which must be turned on before firing and has a maximum life of 60 seconds (and in reality often only about 11 seconds) — is weapon's Achilles' heel. Shelf life of a missile is supposed to be 10 years, but in practice it is often half that. This reflects bad quality control endemic to these missiles, including those made in Czechoslovakia and Poland, which is so bad it is often mistaken for sabotage.

SOVIET UNION: *SA-7b Grail*. More commonly encountered version of SA-7. While sharing same basic capabilities and limitations as SA-7, it is less susceptible to countermeasures. While it is also a tail-chase weapon, its uncooled lead sulfide seeker head allows it to home in on sun glinting off an aircraft's canopy, giving it limited all-aspect capability. Czechoslovakia and Poland are among countries that produce this version under license, and these versions have been used by the contras. This is



was undisputed master of the skies.

Answering the Threat

Helicopters are not about to lie down and die in the face of the SAM threat. As did jet fighter-bombers when they were first threatened by surface-to-air missiles in the 1960s and early 1970s, helicopters are evolving. The harsh Darwinism of the modern battlefield mandates that helicopters and, more important, the men and armed forces that use them, change in three ways: technical, tactical and operational.

Technical countermeasures are those driven by technology. Because they are the most concrete, they are easiest to catalog. Shielding the exhaust of a helicopter to reduce its infrared signature is a simple move, yet one that is partially effective against SA-7s. The Rhodesians were among the first to introduce it, and by the mid-1980s Soviet helicopters in Afghanistan featured a set of shields on the fuselage side that acted as baffles around the engine exhaust. Active infrared countermeasures include flares dis-

U.S. Army AH-64 attack helicopter, armed with Hellfire antitank guided missiles (ATGMs) down in the weeds, which is where Army realizes they will have to operate in future conflicts. Photo: David Isby

variant that frequently turns up in the hands of international arms dealers, with usual market price of about \$50,000 per missile.

SOVIET UNION: SA-14. Improved SA-7, also uses infrared homing. Dates from late 1970s and has been widely exported; customers include Sandinistas (who have used it to destroy at least one contra helicopter), Cuba and Angola. Because Soviets have exported it so widely, it is thought not to be anywhere near as sophisticated or capable as the Stinger.

SOVIET UNION: SA-16. Latest Soviet infrared homing man-portable SAM is recognizable by conical nose cap of its firing cannister. More sophisticated than SA-14, it is still believed not to incorporate any Stinger technology or to be as effective. It has been exported to Angola and Finland, among other countries.

SOVIET UNION: SA-16 FO. "SA-16 Follow-on," laser-guided SAM that Soviets are believed to have under development or, indeed, may already have in service. Believed to be similar to U.S.-designed Rockwell Sabre SAM that was designed to meet same specifications as the Stinger, but use laser guidance. If it uses infrared guidance, the United States should expect it to reflect Stinger technology.

EGYPT: Ain Sakr. Egyptian-made version of SA-7b incorporates much western technology that is intended to give it all-angle capability. Launcher comes with night sight. Reported in action in Afghanistan. Egyptians are looking to export these weapons, especially in Middle East.

CHINA: HN-5A. Improved Chinese-built version of SA-7b. They have been widely exported to Iran. Like SA-7b, they must be fired in salvos to be effective. Chinese arms sales policies mean these are likely to become widespread.

SOUTH AFRICA: Man-Portable SAM. South Africans have completed development of their own advanced man-portable, surface-to-air missile, supposedly more advanced than Soviet-made systems South Africans have faced in Angola for many years. Little is known of this new weapon.

GREAT BRITAIN: Blowpipe. Command-guided weapon. Gunner must "fly" the missile to target using thumb trigger, keeping cross-hair in sights lined up with target and flare in missile's tail. If this sounds complicated, try it with a Hind coming in to rattle your dog tags. Guidance method puts a premium on gunner training and mandates much simulator time, making it less effective than fire-and-forget weapons for Third World guerrillas. Guidance system allows head-

on shots on closing targets, unlike its contemporaries, the Redeye and SA-7.

GREAT BRITAIN: Javelin. Standard British Army man-portable SAM. Uses improved version of Blowpipe's command guidance, without need to use separate thumb trigger. Heavily dependent on operator skill, its large launch unit means it is relatively heavy weapon, so Javelin teams must be in top physical shape if they are to keep up with light infantry forces. Unlike infrared-guided missiles, they are not fire-and-forget weapons, a tactical drawback.

SWEDEN: RBS-70. Laser-homing SAM requires crew of three to move tracker, mount and missiles, and it is frequently mounted on a jeep. Laser guidance makes it heavier, but also less susceptible to countermeasures. Gunner also requires more elaborate training than with a weapon such as the Stinger. While Sweden's arms export laws are intended to limit availability of RBS-70 on international arms market, reportedly a number were delivered to Iran via Singapore.

FRANCE: Mistral. Just entering production in mid-1988, it uses same improved infrared laser guidance as Stinger-POST. Heavy, multi-man system, many will be mounted on light armored cars, which will have thermal sight for night engagements.

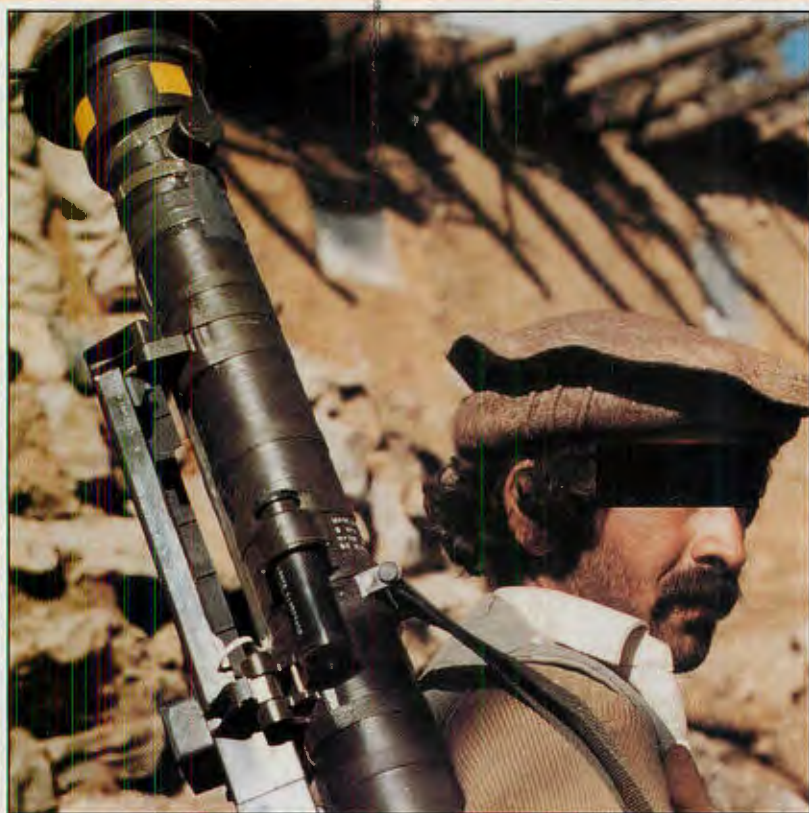
pensed from an aircraft in flight to decoy away heat-seeking missiles — something the Soviets have been doing in Afghanistan for years. Having a source of infrared radiation on your helicopter will jam the seeker head of an infrared missile. The Soviet Hot Brick system used in Afghanistan uses this principle. Mounted on the dorsal spine of the helicopter aft of the engines, it generates infrared radiation that will hopefully prevent a missile's seeker head from "seeing" the engine's radiation and locking on. It is not even as effective as the Vietnam-era AAQ-4 used by U.S. helicopters, now superseded by more advanced systems on most of our battlefield helicopters.

Tactical countermeasures to SAMs are

those performed by helicopter crews, themselves. Flying very low, under the minimum altitude of the missiles, is the most obvious, and it has been practiced by almost every helicopter force faced with a SAM threat. It can be effective, especially against earlier SAMs. The South African air force in Namibia and Angola has had over 160 SA-7s fired at its helicopters and none have hit, in large part due to the use of extreme low-altitude flight. But this mandates a high level of pilot skill, especially in terrain more mountainous than that encountered by the South Africans. Night flight is another countermeasure, and is the one most widely adopted by the Soviets in Afghanistan. The Soviets have also succeeded in combining

night and low-level flight in Afghanistan; they managed to use this tactic to insert a multi-battalion sized air assault force in the rear of resistance forces during the relief of Khost in December 1987-January 1988.

Operational countermeasures include all those tactics which do not entail directly countering the SAM or its users. In 1987-88, the Soviets tried to pressure the Pakistanis into cutting off the supply of Stingers to the Afghan resistance by orchestrating the world's largest campaign of state-supported terror against Pakistan, supplemented by cross-border air strikes. An intense series of air attacks on 23-26 March 1987 targeting refugee camps was in apparent retaliation for Stinger use. Other Sting-



STINGER!

Critics Rave About Afghanistan's Long-Running Hit:

"What turned this whole thing around was the provision of the Stingers. It's a pity and scandalous that we didn't do this earlier in the war." — *U.S. Senator Gordon Humphrey, R-New Hampshire, one of the Congressional architects of U.S. policy in 1984-88.*

"I . . . spent four days with the mujahideen last week, and the Russians are taking a terrible pasting on the ground and all we saw of the Soviet air force were fighter bombers at extremely high altitudes, 20,000 feet, and they would not come down, although they popped

Stinger and Afghan gunners have decimated Soviet aircraft over Afghanistan. Photo: David Isby

flares." — *Congressman Charlie Wilson, D-Texas, an invaluable supporter of the Afghan cause.*

"There are only two things Afghans must have: the Koran and Stingers." — *Ahmad Shah Massoud, resistance commander, north Afghanistan, 1987.*

"The Soviets don't use their helicopter gunships very much anymore. They are now mainly used for operations at night rather than on the battlefield." — *Mohammed Amin Wardak, resistance leader, Wardak Province, 1987.*

"Jet flights have been reduced by 50 percent this year." — *Jalulladin Haqani, resistance leader, southern Paktia Province, 1987.*

"They are afraid of our Stingers. The Russians think we shell their posts just to lure their aircraft. We do." — *Abdul Ghani, resistance leader, Paktia Province.*

"Stinger has really frightened them. They have depended on their air capability, but that capability has now tremendously decreased. This has raised our morale and allowed us to take the initiative. Stinger has had a major tactical and strategic significance in our struggle." — *Rahim Wardak, resistance leader.*

"Stingers have effectively changed the equation. They have allowed the resistance to set up real sanctuaries." — *Olivier Roy, French scholar and Afghanistan expert, 1987.*

"Only a handful of jets fly into the valley every day at very high altitude to drop a few bombs before leaving the area as soon as possible, apparently afraid of the mujahideen's sophisticated anti-aircraft weapons. Helicopters have become a rare sight." — *Floris Van Stratten, Dutch journalist, Hajibad, Kunar, 6 July 1987.*

"A devastating weapon marked 'made in U.S.A.'" — *Izvestia, July, 1987.*

"(Stingers) . . . created additional difficulties for Afghan Army and Soviet troops. This led to additional casualties among Afghan and Soviet troops and the air force." — *Soviet deputy Foreign Ministry spokesman Boris Pyadyshev, 16 July 1987.*

"Your [American] missiles and your women, they are both very dangerous." — *sexist utterance by Soviet journalist, Khost, Paktia Province, January 1988.*

ers were lost to air strikes while they were hidden in caches or being moved on convoys. Others were sold to or seized by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, turned over to the communists in return for large rewards, or captured in battle. In Afghanistan, Angola and Nicaragua, diplomatic moves by the communists have stressed the importance of cutting off aid to guerrillas — including SAMs — to achieve peace. On the battlefield, the Soviets have tried to target Stingers before they have been used, in convoys, caches, or assembly areas.

The man-portable SAM is but a part of the overall trend in modern war: Everything gets more mobile and more deadly. With the rise of the light antitank weapon (LAW) — the first one was the Panzerfaust used by the Germans in the Second World War — every infantryman acquired the power to kill a tank. But this did not drive the tank from the battlefield. It did mandate that the tank, more than ever before, fight as part of a combined arms team and apply sound, basic modern tactics. Today, no tank commander without a well-developed death wish would take his force into battle like a squadron of battleships, moving in a neat formation, regardless of terrain. Rather, tanks on the modern battlefield move like infantrymen, some dashing from cover to cover while others fire, combining fire and movement.

Helicopters can survive even on the high-intensity battlefield if they adapt the same way. Attack helicopters now almost universally use terrain masking to get within range, then “pop up” only long enough to acquire their target, fire, and get back down behind the terrain, hopefully before the enemy can respond. Just as today’s tanks are dependent on support by other arms, so are helicopters. If in a future war in Europe a U.S. commander were ordered to make an air assault on the Soviet side of the Forward Line Own Troops or FLOT (what the British call “the coal face” or “the sharp end”) in conjunction with a counterattack, he would not fly in daylight, at medium altitude, or in massed formations, as was often done in Vietnam. Rather, the helicopters would move out at night, using low nap-of-the-earth flight tactics and making maximum use of terrain concealment. Artillery would be used to suppress air defense weapons along the corridor the force would fly through. The Air Force would help too, with “Wild Weasel” defense suppression aircraft to engage any radar-directed SAM systems or anti-aircraft guns that tried to engage the incoming helicopters. F-15 fighters with look-down, shoot-down capability could help counter Soviet air-to-air helicopters that would try to intercept the incoming air assault. The new threats require that helicopter pilots train harder and under more taxing simulated combat conditions. They mean that there must be enough long-range artillery weapons — like the 227mm Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) to suppress enemy air defenses and enough Wild Weasels and F-15s to provide fixed-wing support. Because these assets



are in short supply, it means that in a war in Europe it is likely that U.S. helicopters will do most — but by no means all — of their work on their own side of the FLOT.

But the Soviets, committed to the battlefield offensive, are not so lucky. They cannot keep the bulk of their attack helicopters on their own side of the FLOT, shifting them as a mobile source of firepower or as a reserve backstop as NATO would. They would have to go out and attack, and so render themselves vulnerable to air defense weapons.

A Stinger gunner in a potential future conflict in Europe would soon end up envying the Afghans. Many of the factors that made for successful Stinger use in Afghanistan would not be present in a war in Europe. Foremost is the Identification, Friend or Foe (IFF) problem. The Afghans resolved that quite nicely: If it flies, it dies. In a war in Europe, however, there would be a bewildering variety of allied and enemy aircraft filling the skies, and Stinger gunners will have to use their IFF equipment to make very sure who they are firing at. This will mean that some opportunities for a kill will inevitably have to be passed up. The

TOP: Redeye surface-to-air missile. Photo: U.S. Army

ABOVE: Even in early years of Afghan war, mujahideen could still inflict losses. This Mi-24 or Mi-25 Hind-D or -E was shot down in Panjshir IV offensive in 1981. Photo: *Jamiat-e-Islami Afghanistan*

Stinger cannot effectively engage targets hidden by cloud, and Europe has much more restricted visibility than Afghanistan. The Stingers supplied to the Afghans had no night sights. (No Stingers in service in 1988 had them, although they were under development.) In a potential conflict in Europe, however, the Soviets will stress round-the-clock operations. The Soviets will also have a much higher concentration of forces available than they had in Afghanistan, allowing them also to use the tactics of putting down suppressive artillery fire along corridors used by helicopters or fighter-bombers and by concentrating their aircraft together so as to saturate the defenses in a small sector, then bursting through into the rear area. Despite its potential lethality, Stinger gunners will not have it all their own



TOP: Soviet Mi-24 Hind-D fires ATGM. When faced with modern air defenses it will have to use minimal exposure techniques, rather than high-altitude attack such as shown here. Photo: DoD

ABOVE: AH-1 belongs to older generation of attack helicopters. Next generation will have to be more "stealthy," with smaller visual, infrared and radar signatures. Photo: Bell Helicopter

way in a future high-intensity conflict.

Future of the Helicopter on the Modern Battlefield

The U.S. military must be aware that it cannot avoid the same sort of opposition the Soviets encountered in Afghanistan. Even if the current Soviet man-portable SAMs — and the SA-7 has now been supplemented by the upgraded SA-14 and SA-16 — are not the equal of the Stinger and the improved Stinger-POST, the Soviets had already gotten their hands on Stinger technology — obtained by Soviet intelligence via Greece — before they captured any in Afghanistan. In addition, the Soviets are believed to be developing, if not deploying, laser-guided SAMs similar to the Swedish-

designed RBS-70, so the United States must have suitable laser countermeasures.

One way the United States has acted to keep these new weapons from driving helicopters off the battlefield has been by the standard trident of technical-tactical-operational countermeasures, as well as by developing new aircraft. The AH-64 Apache is more likely to survive than the AH-1 Cobra: It is more maneuverable, has less of an infrared signature, and is less vulnerable to battle damage. The Marines' new MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor will move faster than the current CH-46, reducing exposure time. The proposed LHX multimission helicopter would incorporate a broad range of countermeasures.

But the United States has long known that even a light air defense can exact a terrible toll in helicopters. The initial North Vietnamese use of SA-7s in 1972 yielded a 33 percent kill ratio: each three fired shot down one helicopter. Because the rules of engagement on Grenada prevented attack aircraft from saturating a target area with bomblets before the gunships went in, two Marine AH-1s were shot down by the same ZU-23 23mm antiaircraft battery. To survive on the modern battlefield, helicopters are going to

have to use many of the same sophisticated tactics as fighter-bombers. Just as strike aircraft have their fighter escorts, today anti-tank helicopters may well require helicopters armed with air-to-air missiles and cannon to guard against enemy air-to-air helicopters or, more importantly, to destroy the enemy's antitank helicopters. With the increasing number of radar-directed SAMs and air defense artillery systems, a light anti-radiation missile (ARM) mounted on helicopters could help counter them. All of this will certainly detract from the helicopter's main battlefield missions, but it will not make them impossible.

The impact on the Soviet military of the Stinger and its counterpart is potentially significant. Since the 1970s, the Soviets have spent many billions of rubles creating a large, sophisticated, and powerful helicopter force where before there was none. If a bunch of Third World guerrillas with hand-held SAMs can defeat this force, what would happen if it came up against NATO?

The Soviets must have considered this but have apparently come to the decision that they can still operate their helicopters in a potential future conflict. Twice in recent decades, the Soviets have conducted large-scale public reevaluations of major elements of their armed forces. After tank forces using Soviet equipment and tactics were soundly defeated in the 1973 Middle East War, the Soviets were very worried that the tank had been rendered obsolete. But, emerging from the debate came the usual range of solutions — technical, tactical and operational — to keep this from happening. Similarly, after the 1982 Lebanon War, the defeat of large numbers of Soviet-made air defense weapons in the hands of the Syrians led to a large-scale reevaluation of that aspect of the Soviet military. But the defeat of Soviet helicopters in Afghanistan has led to no such debate, no such reevaluation. This suggests either that the Soviets have decided it is too painful to discuss these things in public when the losses are their own, unlike the previous two occasions when they were Arab losses, or that the Soviets have decided that the helicopter is indeed heading toward obsolescence, or that they already have decided they can adapt the helicopter to modern conditions. Their answer will only be seen in the future as the Soviets reveal new helicopters and how they intend to use them.

But despite the fact that the helicopter is here to stay on the modern battlefield, the man-portable SAM has still had a tremendous impact on Third World conflicts. The man-portable SAM is one of the chief reasons why today great powers cannot have small wars. To counter an opponent using man-portable SAMs will require a great deal of resources and sophistication. The use of man-portable SAMs in Afghanistan, Angola, and Nicaragua is another example of high technology in the Third World changing the face of regional conflicts. Wars in the Third World, regardless of who they are fought against, today tend to



Soviet SA-14 Gremlin surface-to-air missile.
Photo: David Isby

be fought with the latest weapons rather than the hand-me-downs of the more sophisticated nations. This is certainly not limited to SAMs. The Iranian Silkworm anti-shiping missiles changed the balance of power in the Gulf. Today, Libya has more tanks than Great Britain: Colonel Khadaffi is not an easy opponent. This spread of high technology weapons, along with the political costs of conflicts in the world today, makes them harder to wage.

That is the reason why the man-portable SAM is so crucially important. In Afghanistan, the Stingers were the single most important element in persuading the Soviets that withdrawal was better than perseverance. In Angola, Stingers helped show the communists that they could not prevail on the battlefield, and so instead they turned to negotiation. Where the Hind was a symbol of war a decade ago, in 1989 it appears possible that the Stinger may become the symbol of peace. ✎

AIRMOBILE AND AIR ASSAULT FORCES

The vote of confidence in the helicopter as still having a significant place on the modern battlefield is shown by the fact that most of the world's major armies still maintain airmobile and air assault forces.

UNITED STATES: 101st Air Assault Division at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, is the world's largest formation of its type. In addition, each U.S. Army corps and division has capability, respectively, for a battalion or company air assault with organic helicopter assets. Marine Corps — the first force in the world to embrace air assault operations — relies heavily on helicopters for "vertical envelopment," but it does not have specialized units, relying on line Marine battalions.

SOVIET UNION: Though late comers to air assault (their first two-battalion lift was in 1967 maneuvers, while the United States was doing the same thing every day in Vietnam), by 1988 the Soviets had 11 air assault brigades and four airmobile brigades. In addition, there are over 25 air assault battalions, held at army and corps level. The war in Afghanistan has involved many of these units and shown the Soviets the importance of heliborne operations. Each of the five naval infantry brigades has one air assault battalion. At least some high-readiness motorized rifle divisions and motorized rifle brigades (including those in Afghanistan) have one of their motorized rifle battalions trained in air assault operations.



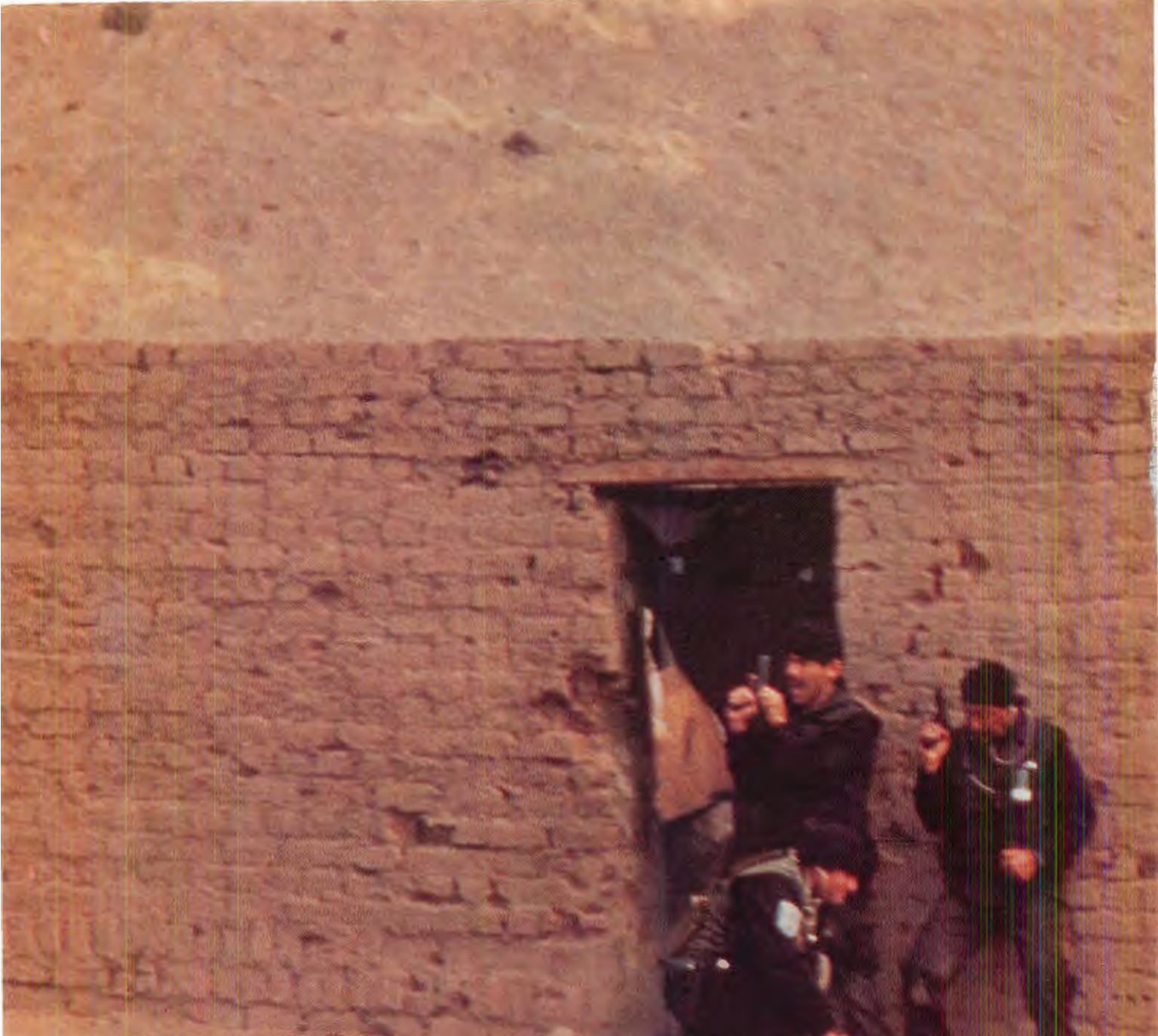
82nd Airborne Division troopers mount up on UH-60A Blackhawk for air assault on Grenada, 1983. Even a small number of man-portable SAMs on island would have made U.S. operations much more difficult. Photo: SP4 Jon E. Long, U.S. Army

FRANCE: Only other air assault division in NATO is the 4eme *Division AeroMobile*. France's 4 DAM is, like all French divisions, about half the size of its U.S. counterparts. It is part of the *Force Action Rapide*, and while its primary mission is acting as vanguard for French forces fighting in Germany, elements have also been deployed to Chad against Colonel Khadaffi.

GREAT BRITAIN: Britain followed the U.S. Marine Corps' lead of not having specialized air assault units for many years. Now the 19th Airmobile brigade based in England is tasked with operat-

ing in Germany in any future conflict. It is supplemented by other infantry also trained in heliborne operations, both regulars and Territorial Army (especially the territorial battalions of the Parachute Regiment). The Royal Marines have no specialized air assault units, but they make extensive use of Royal Navy Sea Kings, as they demonstrated in the Falklands.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: While the three brigades of the German airborne division all retain their jump capability, they will probably be used as a heliborne reserve for each of the three German corps, operating in conjunction with each corps' antitank helicopter regiment. If the Soviets manage a breakthrough, the paratroopers fly in with lots of antitank weapons as the anvil. They then stop the Soviets, and the helicopters will swing into action as the hammer on their flanks.



SOF SPECIAL OPS

DEADLY LIVE FIRE

Peruvian Police Drill to Perfection

by Gene Scroft



RIGHT: Delta troops roll away from speeding van. As van passes the troops assume firing positions. Photo: Gene Scroft



WITH a “whoosh” something flew over my shoulder.

I had heard that sound before. If I had been anywhere else in Latin America, I would have been worried. As I was on the firing range near Lima watching three of Peru’s elite police units going through a series of live fire drills, I wasn’t concerned. I thought the projectile that had just passed over my head was just part and parcel of the all the ordnance going off on the range.

Then someone hit me in the hip with a baseball bat.

LEFT: American instructor, working for the Peruvian government, test fires a 7.62x51mm HK21 GPMG prior to demonstration. Photo: Robert K. Brown

ABOVE: Delta troops blow door prior to entry. Photo: Robert K. Brown

SCROFT IN SOUTH AMERICA

Gene Scroft, a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and former Ranger officer, is a frequent contributor to *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*. He has reported from Afghanistan, Lebanon, Nicaragua and most recently El Salvador and Guatemala. Fully recovered from his wound in Peru, Scroft is again on assignment in South America.

I knew immediately that I had been shot. I spun around and ended up on my back, clutching my leg. There was a large hole in my right front pocket, but I couldn’t see very much blood and there was little pain. It didn’t seem like much of a wound, so I was surprised that I had to take deep breaths to keep from passing out. I was quickly stuffed into a van and we sped off to the police hospital in Lima.

When I was hit my first thought was that someone had actually discharged his weapon to the rear. I discovered in the hospital, however, that I had been shot in the butt — that is, from behind. The round entered my right cheek, made a neat hole through my femur and exited my right hip. The angle of the wound indicated that it

originated from far *behind* the reviewing area! This, and the fact that no one was identified as the firer, made me suspicious, but there wasn't enough information to conclude that it was anything but an accident.

Soldier of Fortune Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown and I were at the range that day for a demonstration on the first anniversary of the founding of Peru's elite police paramilitary forces. Three groups from DOES (Dirección de Operaciones Especiales) are charged with operating against both terrorists and increasingly violent drug runners. Delta was created to fight terrorism in the large urban areas along the coast; BOES (Battalion de Operaciones Especiales) concerns itself with the Andean highlands where Sendero Luminoso guerrillas hold sway over large segments of the predominantly Indian population; and GOES (Grupo de Operaciones Especiales) handles the huge eastern jungles with their drug armies.

First out on the range was the Delta team.

They engaged targets on the run while AK rounds were fired at their feet or, in the case of some low-crawling troops, near their heads. Team snipers armed with scoped Heckler and Koch G3s then engaged targets at 300 meters that were placed only inches above the heads of seated volunteers. A police van, with its lights flashing, then made a headlong rush toward a Delta squad standing in column. They calmly kept their positions until the van was only a foot or two away, then quickly rolled to the side and took up firing positions against the fleeing van. I've seen a lot of dog-and-pony shows in my time, but I must admit that I was impressed.

The next scenario was equally impressive. A mock village was constructed on a hillside and was occupied by an aggressor force made up of Delta members. They were attacked by another team that deployed on line by conducting parachute landing falls from the back of a moving truck. The team immediately opened fire on the aggressors

with live ammunition! Small arms fire and 40mm grenades impacted all around the aggressors as they scrambled into a pit that had been dug for their protection.

One aggressor wasn't quick enough and got caught out in the open. He was determined to put on a good show no matter what, so he pointed his empty weapon at his attackers and yelled "dat-dat-dat." Rounds were impacting so close to this guy that I wasn't sure if the Delta team were excellent marksman trying to thrill the visitors or just poor shots missing the center of his chest. Either way, I was sure that he was going to buy the farm.

As I scrambled to the range's left security berm to get a better shot of the action, exploding detonating cord buried in front of the firing line sent dirt 50 feet into the air.

RIGHT: Delta soldier on parade. His AKM has infrared laser device that marks target with a spot visible through the infra-red goggles around his neck. Photo: SOF Staff



GRINGO COP IN PERU

The task was a simple one. All the trainee had to do was turn around on command and fire his 9mm Star automatic at two silhouettes positioned 25 meters away. Simple except for the fact that a crazy gringo was standing directly in front of one of the targets! Without hesitation the trainee turned and fired two shots. Miraculously, the gringo walked away untouched, leaving behind the uncovered target with two neat holes in its forehead.

This *foreigner* wasn't just some confused tourist who got lost on his way to Machu Picchu. This was American Herbert Dunn, chief instructor for the Peruvian police special forces. Herb explained that he conducted the silhouette drill to teach his trainees target acquisition. Great idea Herb, but who is going to give remedial instruction if they screw up?

In the states, Herb was a deputy sheriff in Pulaski County, Arkansas. He

Student caught unaware by Dunn is attacked and thrown to the ground. After disarming him and dropping him in the dirt, Dunn chastizes the soldier for not paying more attention. Photo: Gene Scroft

liked being a cop but craved more adventure than Pulaski County had to offer. One day he just chucked it all, grabbed his wife and two kids and headed for Peru, the birthplace of his wife, Kimi.

He wanted to use his police experience to start a private security company in Peru. This turned out to be more difficult than he expected. In Peru, who you know, and pay off, is often more important than what you know. In time he was able to get a job working security for a rich Peruvian businessman but this was a far cry from running his own company.

Eventually Herb met some high officials in the Peruvian interior ministry. They attended some of the pistol training Herb gave interested businessmen on the weekends and were impressed. They

offered him a job training their police special forces. The police training started as a part time operation but it soon demanded so much of his time that Herb quit his security job to work full time with the police.

Herb believes in realism when he trains. In all shooting tasks he fires his HK G3 rifle at the ground inches from the shooters. "It's easy to hit targets when everything is silent and calm," Herb explains, "but when the shit starts to fly, that's when you prove you can shoot."

On one exercise a trainee had just completed a demanding obstacle course/shooting exercise in which he hit all of his targets. Pleased with his performance, he turned back toward the starting point. Herb jumped him from behind, took his pistol as he wrestled the trooper to the ground, and severely chastized the stunned trainee for letting his guard down. Herb is a tough task master but I'm sure that the trainee will never again let go of his pistol.

Herb finally started his own company and is doing well protecting businessmen in chaotic Peru. He now spends little time with police. I was surprised to see that he uses many of the same techniques that he used in police training when demonstrating his services to clients, though he hasn't wrestled any of them to the ground yet.

Herb is one of a rare breed of man in this sanitized world — a true adventurer. He threw caution to the wind, moved to an alien land and with guts, determination and skill, became a success at a very deadly business. In the crumbling situation in Peru, increasingly controlled by narcos, communist terrorists and right wing death squads, men like Herb will be the survivors.



BELOW AND RIGHT: Herb Dunn, then serving as an adviser to the Peruvian police special forces, fires his HK G3 in front of a trainee attempting to engage his target. Photo: Gene Scroft



The diversion not only surprised the crowd but also gave the hapless aggressor a chance to escape into the pit.

A moment later I got whacked with the AK bat.

Seven days after I was shot, I was kicked out of the hospital for obnoxious behavior. They wanted to keep me in for at least 10 more days but I wasn't about to lie there for that long and told them so in no uncertain terms. Not that the treatment was bad — far from it. As the only gringo in the place I drew the curious attention of most of the

nursing staff — pretty ladies all. I even received gifts from some folks at the American embassy. One of them was a coffee mug shaped like a woman's breast with its huge erect nipple serving as the drinking spout. The nurses loved it, calling it my "pornografia."

The neat hole in my leg indicated that it was probably an AK round that did the deed (7.62x39mm rounds are known for their clean wounds). X-rays indicated that there wouldn't be any lasting damage. They also showed a piece of shrapnel buried deep

within my other cheek — a reminder of what I thought was a glancing blow from a Soviet grenade in Afghanistan over three years ago. I don't mind a few battle scars, they mark you as being there, but do they all have to be in such an undignified place?

A month after I was shot an incident at the same site changed my mind about whether my injury was accidental. Herb Dunn, an American trainer of the special police units, was driving from the range with his wife when someone shot out his rear window. Luckily, no one was hurt, but this was no



accident. Someone was out to kill him.

The DIRCOTE (Dirección Contra Terrorismo), Peru's special anti-terrorist directorate, told Herb that the communist MRTA (Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement) had ordered his death because of his work with the police. In light of this information, the most probable explanation of my shooting is that I was mistaken for Herb by MRTA assassins. I guess all gringos look alike to the Tupacs.

Embarrassed police officials claimed that someone used a silenced weapon to shoot at

Herb and me from outside the compound. The low ground around the camp and the numerous guards along the perimeter makes this unlikely. Though the authorities vehemently deny it, Herb and I believe that the police have been infiltrated and that the shots came from inside the compound.

Terrorist infiltration is not as farfetched as it may seem. Only days after Herb was attacked, one of President Garcia's elite presidential guard was arrested and admitted to being a long time member of the Maoist Sendero Luminoso guerrilla move-

ment. In October, 14 soldiers were killed in a Sendero Luminoso attack on their barracks. It was later discovered that the killing was started by one of the troops who was actually a Sendero infiltrator.

If you're looking for a great adventure vacation, try Peru. Drug armies, fanatic terrorists, beautiful women and chaotic politics. What more *could you* ask for?

Just take some advice from one who knows — watch your ass! ✖



SOF COUNTERINSURGENCY

COBRA COUNTRY

Guat Soldiers Block Guerrilla Strikes in Quiche

Text & Photos by Joe Cavanaugh

THE crack of M16 fire broke the night calm over Xejuyeu. "Damn, they never let us sleep," Captain Mike said. I glanced at my watch and saw it was 0300; three hours had passed since the first rounds woke us up at midnight. This is how the war is now in Quiche — a war of harassment. After eight years of heavy losses, the guerrillas are vastly outnumbered and outgunned by the Guatemalan army. Still, they persist in harassment, and staging an occasional ambush when conditions are in their favor.

I lay in bed, awake now, wondering if the next rounds would come flying through the thatch roof of our ranchito. By 0430, I managed to fall asleep again, only to be awakened at 0530 by soldiers bustling about preparing for a morning mission. By 0600, 42 soldiers, 50 refugees and I filed out of the perimeter of Xejuyeu into the surrounding mist-covered mountains. Rations were low, and we were going to a milpa (a subsistence-style corn field) three clicks out to harvest some corn that the refugees had planted earlier while working for the guerrillas. If the refugees were seen by the communist guerrillas, they would be shot, because they had left the guerrillas only the week before to apply for amnesty and to be relocated by the government to a "new model village." Guerrillas don't take kindly to being left by their workers. The refugees worked fast gathering corn and yams as the soldiers stood guard around them. We were done in short order, and all returned safely inside the perimeter of Xejuyeu. Although we had no confrontation with the enemy, Captain Mike said they had seen us for sure and were pissed. Not only did we have their workers, but now we had their food, too.

I had arrived at Xejuyeu by Huey from Nebaj the afternoon before, approximately 35 clicks to the south. Captain Mike, commanding officer of Cobra Company, 3rd Battalion, had returned with me, as had an army medic. We had been waiting in Nebaj for five days for a time when there was both a free Air Force helicopter and a break in the cloud cover over Xejuyeu. At this time of year that was only about one hour a day. Twice we had left Nebaj in the Huey only to return 50 minutes later after not being able to land in the cloud-choked valley at Xejuyeu.

When we finally arrived, we were greeted by the lieutenant left in charge when the captain was away. He informed us that the guerrillas had done their best to make sure no one got too well rested. Also, refugees were still trickling in; there were now

LEFT: Catchiquel Indian soldiers on patrol outside the perimeter of Xejuyeu.

GUATEMALA EXPERT

Joe Cavanaugh is a freelance writer who spent a number of years living in Guatemala.



Mountainous Quiche is scene of guerrillas' war of harassment. After eight years of heavy losses, guerrillas are now outnumbered, outgunned and out of favor with the people.

158 of them.

The refugees were hungry and ragged, and many were suffering from one illness or another. They would soon be moved to Nebaj, where they could be cleaned up and resettled in a new village. Cloudy, rainy weather and lack of sufficient helicopters made chances for a quick airlift to Nebaj look slim. Two wounded men left in the Huey that had brought us. One was a civil patroller who received a fragment in the eye; the other was a refugee who was shot in the arm by guerrillas while escaping. The bullet had gone in and out of his bicep and in and out of his forearm. He had waited for eight days with nothing but aspirin to kill the pain until the chopper could get him out.

The first afternoon the medic made rounds of the refugees in the poorest shape. I talked with many of them, asking about how they had joined the guerrillas and the conditions in which they had lived. It was the same story I had heard many times before from the Ixil Indians in Nebaj and Acul. Communist insurgents started infiltrating the region more than 10 years ago. They had lured many Ixiles into fighting with them or working for them by promising them many things. The guerrillas told the Indians they

would kill the rich, divide up their land and distribute it equally. They told the Indians that if they helped, the guerrillas would take care of them, that they would give them "protection," clothing and medicine, and pay them 10 quetzales a day (three times the national minimum wage). The guerrillas told them that if they stuck it out to the end of the war, they would all end up with a nice piece of land, a car to drive, better wages, better schools, etc., etc. Instead, after eight years of promises and hardships, here they were — dressed in rags, hungry, malnourished, sick, and wondering what they would eat and where they would sleep the next day.

One of the refugees (who claimed he wasn't a combatant but one of the working population) just happened to know where some of the guerrilla positions were on the mountainside from which we were receiving enemy fire. With the help of binoculars, we could see some dried vegetation on the otherwise green hillside. The refugee explained that the guerrillas had semi-bunkers dug into the hillside in some natural rock outcroppings. There, they had erected thatch roofs about a foot and a half in height where they could stay out of the rain and be protected from return fire by the rocks and shallow trench they had dug. He explained they would stay under such shelters for days at a time, firing off and on at the soldiers in Xejuyeu.

Luckily for us, their leaf roofs had dried

and turned brown, although they were still only barely visible at 600 yards. The captain decided that this night we would strike back. We positioned two FN MAGs and two mortars to fire on the positions. Range was calculated as best we could. One of the positions was just to the left side of a huge cieba tree, and we hoped it would be visible in the moonlight and aid us in directing fire.

The rest of the afternoon passed calmly. I asked the captain if I could spend the night with the soldiers up on the hill with the mortars. He replied, "Sure, if it will be comfortable enough for you." I knew it wouldn't be "comfortable," but I wanted to be right there when things started happening. So I took my blanket and crawled under one of the tarps with the troops and waited. It rained hard for the first three or four hours and then started clearing off. By midnight, the large cieba tree was visible and we were ready.

Pretty soon the guerrillas started firing, first a single round, then two bursts. I turned to the corporal next to me and said, "There they are." The soldiers let loose simultaneously with both MAGs and two mortar rounds. Tracers streaked across the valley, and mortar rounds exploded with a great illumination. One round was off by quite a bit, but the other exploded just to the left of the cieba. MAGs fired short bursts into the surrounding area and then stopped and all was silent. Captain Mike came running up in the darkness with his SAR-48 and asked "Que Paso?" I replied, "La hechamos la verga." (We gave it to 'em). The enemy stopped firing and everything was quiet the rest of the night.

Next day, another family of six refugees came into Xejuyeu. I made rounds with the medic and rested up from the excitement of the night before. In the afternoon, I headed out on patrol with the captain and one platoon. We were to dismantle the enemy's positions and carry the leaf back to Xejuyeu for use in erecting a shelter for the new refugees. Three refugee men accompanied us as guides. A lieutenant took another platoon to patrol the other side of Xejuyeu, where the guerrillas could be repositioning themselves. We made our way up the steep hillside covered with thick vegetation to the first enemy position. It was a shallow bunker with a very low leaf roof. A trail led to another thatched position about 60 meters away.

I mentioned to the captain that it didn't appear there were any casualties from the night before. He replied that the insurgents always put *maximum effort* into carrying off their dead, so the soldiers wouldn't build up their morale by seeing how many enemy they had killed.

We dismantled the roofs and were bundling up the leaf when the crack of rifle fire echoed toward us. The captain's men laid low and held their fire. Guerrillas were below us now *and close*, maybe 100 yards away. We waited for more fire to determine their positions before opening up, but they had apparently run off. All remained quiet. We continued to dismantle their positions and then headed back to camp, taking a differ-



ABOVE: Soldiers dismantle guerrilla position outside perimeter of Xejuyeu after night fight where cieba tree was used for directing fire.

BELOW: Soldier (wearing maroon beret) helps refugees arriving in Nebaj.



ent route to avoid ambush. Refugees carried their leaf. Just outside of Xejuyeu, the point man discovered a punji-stake trap before anyone stepped into it. Captain Mike told me there were many such traps in the area.

During the early 1980s, the whole northern part of Quiche, along with many other areas of Guatemala, was under complete enemy control. It had taken eight years for the army to make it from Nebaj to Xejuyeu, which had been occupied by another army company just four months earlier. Before then it had been a guerrilla base. The previous company had suffered three KIA and 17 WIA. Captain Mike's company had only been there a month and had suffered no casualties yet. They had come eight days by foot from Nebaj and had been ambushed twice enroute.

On my third day at Xejuyeu all troops stayed inside the perimeter. No patrols were sent out, because we had heard on the radio there was a civil defense patrol lost in the area. Captain Mike did not want to run into them and have an accidental confrontation since they were dressed in civilian clothing and could be mistaken for guerrillas.

That night, we were again kept from our sleep by the guerrillas firing into the encampment and shouting ideological messages, most of which we could not hear. We would shout back: "Faggot guerrillas — come on in and eat fried chicken with us.



You've lost the war!"

It rained off and on every day, and at times there wasn't much to do. I chatted with the officers or mingled with the refugees and heard about their life with the guerrillas. They had been exposed to constant ideological lectures from the insurgents, most of it directed against "los gringos" in the United States. We Americans were the guerrillas' enemy, and they were fighting against us, because we supported the Guatemalan army. I explained to the refugees that in reality one reason the war had lasted so long in Guatemala was that the United States helped so little. They had been told that the guerrillas were near victory in Guatemala and El Salvador, and would next go through Mexico and ultimately to the United States. It all didn't sound much like the "landless peasant revolt" portrayed by much of the media in this country. The refugee population had had no accurate outside news for eight years now, and the guerrillas were in complete command of their thoughts.

Sporadic enemy fire broke up the monotony of the afternoon. The children, dogs and chickens all scattered for cover, and then all would regroup, laughing and joking minutes later.

The evening of my fourth day the commanding officer at Santa Cruz de Quiche



ABOVE: Captain Mike, commanding officer of Cobra Company, 3rd Battalion, arrives in Xejuyeu aboard Guatemalan air force Huey.

BELOW: After arriving at Xejuyeu all refugees are gathered together and told by the captain, with the help of Indian interpreters, that more food has arrived, as well as a military doctor and medical supplies.



radioed orders that the refugees would have to arrive in Nebaj by foot because of limited choppers. We (Cobra Company) would accompany them as far as Chel, a 12-hour walk from Xejuyeu. From there, the civil defense corps would accompany them to Chajul, from where they could be taken to Nebaj in army trucks. The whole trip would take the refugees more than a week. No one was amused at the thought of taking 164 refugees, most of them women and children in poor health, on a 12-hour hike through jungle-covered, enemy-infested mountains to Chel. The captain discussed it with his lieutenants, and they decided it would be best to leave early the next morning and try to make it to Estrella Polar, 10 hours away, by dark. The refugees were then told to be ready at 0530 the next morning with all their possessions.

The following morning everyone was ready, and by 0600 we were all leaving the barricaded protection of Xejuyeu. Forty soldiers, two lieutenants, 160 refugees and I filed along a series of footpaths that led to Estrella Polar. It was a gray, drizzly day. Refugees trudged along, carrying their chickens, turkeys, pots, pans, brothers, sisters, and babies. Considering their health, age, sex, and bare feet, they moved along surprisingly well. They were tough and weathered from years of hard work and discomfort. The terrain was rough, very steep and muddy. There were punji-stake traps everywhere, most of which were already uncovered by previous patrols. We passed by old guerrilla camps that the civil defense had burned and large clearings planted with corn, beans, yams and sugar cane. By late afternoon, the refugees were very tired and the point men had to stop frequently to let everyone catch up. At 1600 a downpour started, and everyone was soaked to the bone by the time we reached the small village of Estrella Polar.

Cobra Company received one of the warmest welcomes I've ever had in my life. All the villagers came by, wishing us good afternoon and giving us hot coffee with chile. They pitched in with tortillas for the soldiers and beans and coffee for the refugees. The officers and I were given a place to sleep inside one of the shacks, where we dried off by a warm fire and ate chicken soup and hot tortillas. Everyone was relieved that we hadn't been ambushed and that things had gone surprisingly smoothly.

Early the next morning, the civil defense corps gathered in front of the small town hall. They were from neighboring Chel and Finca la Perla and were waiting to escort the refugees to Chajul. Some of the troops accompanied the civil defense contingent and the refugees as far as Chel. From there, the refugees were on their own.

We spent the day at Estrella Polar resting and eating. The soldiers were not only hungry, but bored with their C-rations. Everywhere I looked they were eating and snacking, and by noon they had virtually bought the place out. Many carried basic foodstuffs back with them to Xejuyeu. That evening,



Army lieutenant gives the shirt off his back to refugee girl.

we arranged to hire three civil patrollers who knew the bush well. They would accompany us to Xejuyeu the next day, as we were to take a different route back. The commanding lieutenant thought the guerrillas had surely seen us leave with the refugees and would be waiting in ambush for us on the return trip.

Next morning, we started out with a vertical ascent of the side of the mountain. The trail was muddy and slippery, but we made good time — 1½ hours to the top. The morning passed uneventfully as we humped up and down the mountains.

Shortly after a 1030 break, we came to an overgrown milpa. It was a small valley with maybe 300 acres of 4-foot second-growth bush surrounded by jungle. Our lieutenant ordered everyone to spread out and stay 5 meters apart. One lieutenant and 15 men stayed behind with one MAG and two M79s to cover us while we crossed.

Sure enough, when we were spread out across the valley — crack-crack-crack and everyone was down. We immediately heard the MAG open up in back of us, followed by a volley of grenades from the M79s. Apparently the guerrillas were only 300 meters from our rear group. Those of us in the valley opened up with semi-automatic Galil fire and the enemy fire immediately stopped. It had been a good call by the lieutenant and one that the guerrillas hadn't expected. We took a quick head count and then inched our way up and out of the valley to the cover of the forest. From there, we

took up positions to cover the rear group as they rapidly crossed the milpa. The lieutenant concluded it was probably only four or five guerrillas who had been grubbing yams out of the hillside and had not set up for an actual ambush, proving that the loss of their workers (the refugees) was effective in combating the insurgents. For now, they had to grub for their meals themselves instead of devoting their time to ambushing patrols.

We continued on our way. Within a half hour of Xejuyeu, our guides left us to return to Estrella Polar. Everyone was very eager to reach the perimeter as we crossed the milpas surrounding Xejuyeu. We arrived with no further delay and everyone was content. The chopper had brought in more supplies the day before, so everyone had plenty of C-rations plus all the goodies brought from Estrella Polar.

We passed several uneventful days. We were just discussing whether the guerrillas had moved off when the familiar high-pitched crack of M16s broke the silence one afternoon. This time it appeared that they were 1,000 meters away and none of the shots even came close to us. Three hours later, they fired another six or eight shots from the opposite side and shouted more of their psychological messages that no one could understand. They were again very far away, although one

shot did clunk into the rocks a few yards from the captain and myself.

At night, Captain Mike and I would sit up and swap stories. He was a very educated man with a lot of combat experience. I had had a great deal of close contact with the Ixil Indians over the last eight years and shared some of my stories with him as well. We both came to the same conclusion as to what hinders victory most of all: Everyday people in the United States (and in Guatemala City) don't have any idea what's happening in Guatemala or the rest of Central America. They are content with their sheltered lives of VCRs, stereos and new cars and won't worry about anybody taking it away until it's too late.

"When will the people of the United States wake up to communist expansion?" I asked Captain Mike. "No se," he replied. "Maybe when they're on the Rio Grande."

Monday morning we received word that a chopper was coming to leave the month's payroll. One of the lieutenants and I packed up for the trip back to Nebaj. He had been at Xejuyeu for a month and was anxious for his R & R.

By 1000, we could hear the chopper and moved up to the landing pad. It was a civilian Bell helicopter converted for military use by the addition of machine guns and rockets. It was still blue and white though, and it stuck out like a sore thumb. It touched down, and we threw our equipment and ourselves in as the guerrillas opened up. This time they were close — 300-400 meters — and they were connecting with the Bell.

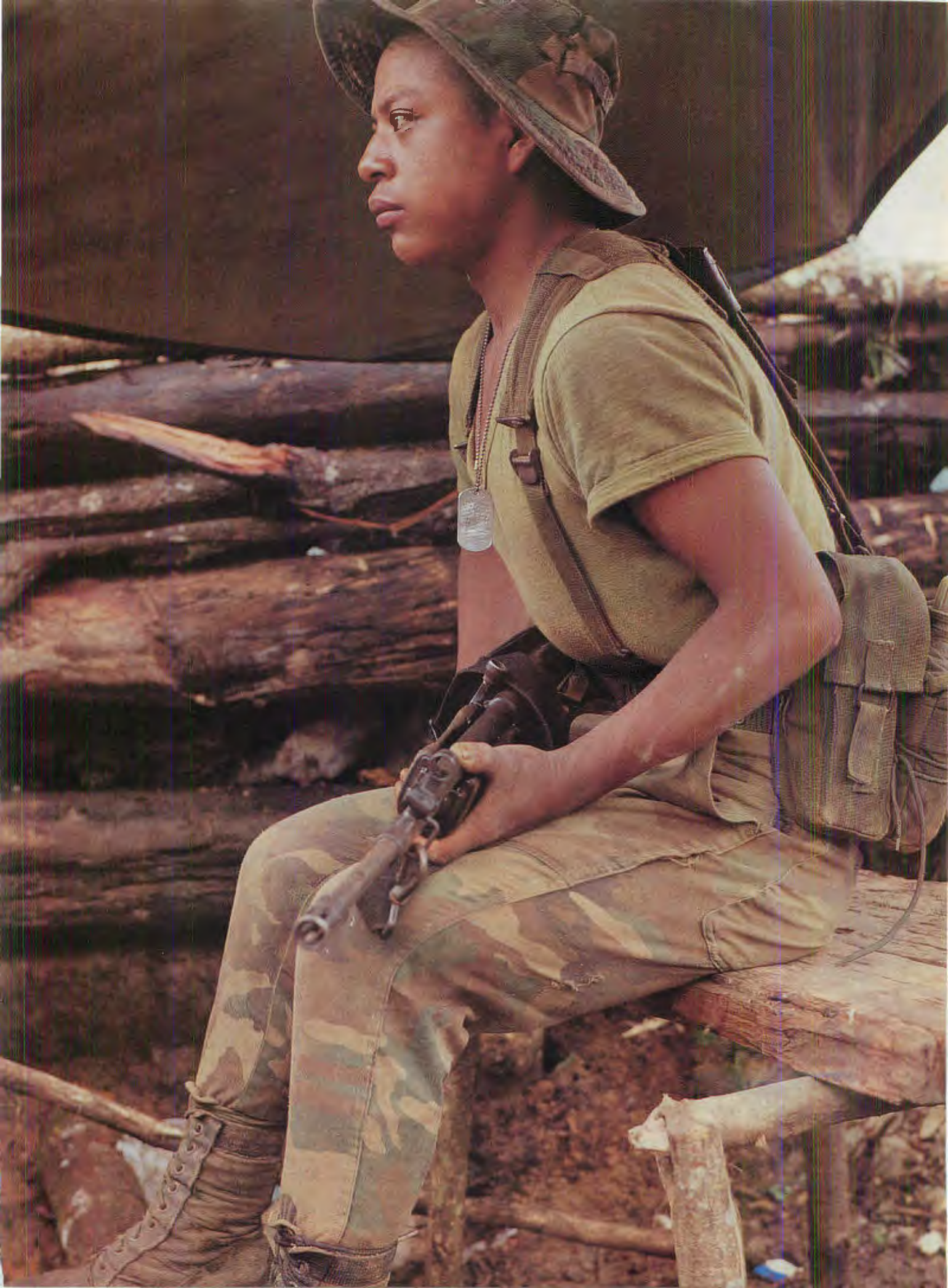
"Vamanos!" screamed the lieutenant and we were off. A half-dozen refugees huddled down on the floor as one of the door gunners let his machine gun rip. For us the chaos only lasted seconds and we were out of range. But we heard later in Nebaj that the troops at Xejuyeu engaged the enemy for a full 20 minutes after we left. Luckily, there were no casualties except for a few minor repairs on the Bell.

Nebaj was busy that day, with choppers buzzing in and out, unloading refugees and loading supplies. I had lunch with a good friend of mine from Acul, a neighboring model village. He is in the civil defense and an experienced combatant himself. He told me that just the day before, only two clicks out of Nebaj, half way to Acul, guerrillas had stopped villagers returning to Acul with supplies purchased in Nebaj. They had robbed them of all their goods, including a case of beer intended for resale in one of the small tiendas. The civil patrollers later gave chase 'til dark but never caught up.

My friend remarked that seven years ago, the guerrillas didn't have to rob, because people were glad to give. Now, the Indians mistrust them and no longer support them.

Hopefully, with no one to support them, the guerrillas will wither and fade into the mountains — forever. ☒

Young soldier stands perimeter guard at Xejuyeu. Although the guerrillas won't attack en masse, they will stand off and throw in harassing M16 rounds.





JUST after midnight, the Chinese rocket came in low and fast — straight toward the military and civil airfield on the edge of Peshawar, Pakistan. The rocket was almost certainly fired by Soviet-hired Pathan tribesmen — wild men ready enough to kill but ignorant when it came to sighting even a simple 107mm rocket launcher. They'd almost certainly have had only a pile of dirt for a launch platform out in the no man's land of the *Pakistani Tribal Territories*.

So the rocket nose dipped too soon to hit the runways but remained right on target for the elite suburb of University Town, home for scores of anti-Soviet foreigners who work with the Afghan mujahideen and the 3.2 million refugees forced out of Afghanistan by the communists. University Town is also a favorite suburb for Peshawar's influential and rich. Though only loaded with incendiary material, the rocket's concrete-penetration capability was going to cause an awful lot of death and damage in any living

Ghulam Hussain with parts of recovered (hot) warhead.

room into which it burst.

Then the miracle. Missing a doctor's house by what must have been only inches, it roared into an empty building lot and slammed four and a half feet into soft ground under a pile of sand! There it stayed, smoking and hot but unexploded.

"I heard the noise but thought it was just some scaffolding falling," a young boy from the neighboring house told me the next morning. "The builders sometimes work at night, you know."

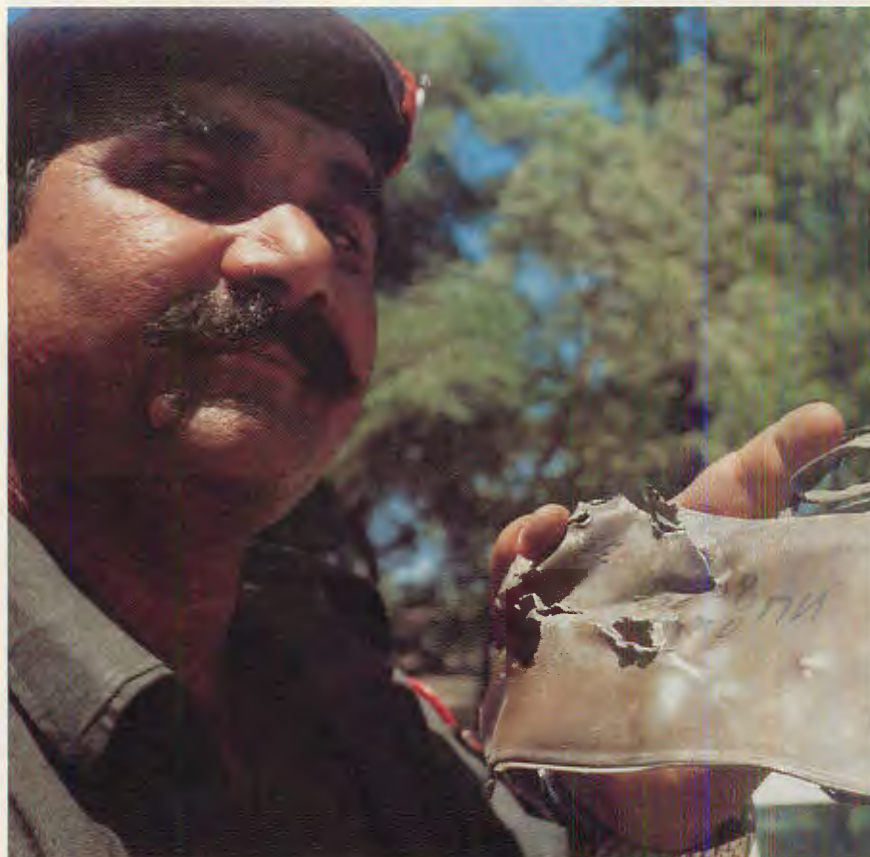
That was right. It was the month of Ramadan, the Moslem fast. Muj fighting across the nearby border inside Afghanistan and poor people in Peshawar were usually strict about not eating or drinking from day-break to sundown. Manual laborers often worked at night when they could drink water.

"I just went back to sleep," the boy said.

The site watchman saw the fine whiff of smoke when he woke that morning. He called the police. They radioed the bomb disposal squad headquarters. When the call came in I was sitting with the head of the squad, retired Major Ghulam Hussain. He put down the phone and smiled at me grimly. It just proved the very point he'd been making to me. He called for a car and we moved out into the already hot morning.

Peshawar looked peaceful. Deceptive, that, as Ghulam Hussain had been explaining. According to U.S. State Department figures, 45 percent of all the world's deaths and injuries by terrorism last year occurred in Pakistan. By my count of the official handouts to local newspapers, that was 197 people dead. Sixty in one horrendous day in Karachi. And if you look at the figures closely, 70 percent of the killings were in and around Peshawar.

The killers, according to the ordinary man



SOF COUNTERTERRORISM

Sergeant Shah Naseem
with metal casing of
mine found in
the Kabul River.

ALL BOMBS CONSIDERED

Pakistan Police EOD Squad Defuses Peshawar

Text & Photos by Len McGrane

ON THE SCENE

Len McGrane is a Peshawar-based freelance writer. Drawing on his knowledge of the area and his skill with the local language, McGrane finds stories where others dare not tread. This is his first contribution to *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*.

in the street, are Soviet agents. Everywhere in this crowded city where I have talked with people in the local Pashtu language, they blame Kabul and the communists.

Ghulam Hussain had to be more careful about what he said, of course. "The killers are the people who don't want the Pakistan government to support the Afghan refugees," he explained. "The people who are against Pakistan's existing foreign policy."

Broadly speaking, that policy is that the refugees are welcome to stay for a while in Pak camps; that Najibullah and the communists should be thrown out of Kabul; and that the muj who have been pushing back the Soviets so doggedly for over eight years have the right to form a new Afghan government now that the Soviets are retreating north.

People here buy bits and pieces of this policy, although almost to a man they want



the refugees out. They say *kabulis* (the local name for refugees) are pushing up house rents, taking jobs, keeping the price of unskilled labor down and putting Pak lives at risk with all the bombing. The saboteurs are playing successfully on this. Each bomb blast brings on another round of complaints about refugees. Local patience is wearing thin, people say.

Surprisingly, even with the Geneva Accords signed and the Soviets beating a retreat from Afghanistan, the Peshawar bombings are not slowing down. Rather, Ghulam Hussain feels they are building up to an almighty climax.

"This is our hour of crisis. I feel the cases of sabotage are on the increase. On a very sharp increase. The conflict in Afghanistan is still going on. The mujahideen say they were never a party to the Accords, and they will carry on their job. They are encouraged by the Americans to go on. So the war is going on. Sabotage is part of the war, so naturally it will also go on."

All very logical. All very chilling.

"They paused for a period of about two months [around the time the Accords were signed in Switzerland] to see if there was any change in the Pakistan attitude. That

TOP: Ghulam Hussain in hole trying to pull out rocket motor. It is most unusual in this culture for an officer of Ghulam Hussain's rank to do manual work in presence of his subordinates.

ABOVE: Motor is finally brought out and washed clean by Sgt. Shah Naseem and others.

was just the lull before the storm, though. I feel they have now come to the conclusion that this war will go on and so have resumed their activity again."

They sure have. The night before we spoke, 14 people had been blown up in a single blast. The killers are usually not Afghan communists but local Pakistani Pathans. "They are mostly mercenaries, on hire," Ghulam Hussain told me. "There are quite a few people who can be hired, because hired killing is a profession in these parts."

An understatement. Blood feuding and revenge killings are rampant among the Pathan tribesmen around Peshawar and along the wild border with Afghanistan. I've personally met a number of armed Pathans on the run from cousins or rival landholders. Some of them hide in villages

in the mountains between here and Afghanistan, in the *Qabil*, the Northwest Frontier Province's five Tribal Agencies of Malakand, Khyber, Kurram, South Waziristan and North Waziristan. There's no law in the Qabail except for the Koran, the tribe and the rifle. So if a man gives them protection in his house, almost no one can touch them. Even the tough Frontier Constabulary, who've operated in the Qabail for more than 100 years, are often unable to recover kidnap victims or arrest assassins. And it's from these safe villages that hired killers drift down to the plains with Kabul's bombs under their shawls and the gleam of rubles in their greedy eyes.

"They are being paid," Ghulam Hussain said grimly.

I'd already heard this from a diplomatic source. He'd claimed the paymaster was WAD, the *Wazarat-e-Aaminyat*, Kabul's dreaded secret police.

Kabul had a sliding pay scale for its terrorists, the diplomat said — the more damage, deaths and publicity, the greater the payment. A senior Peshawar police official agreed with this, even giving the murder rates. At least 10,000 rupees (Rs) for an explosion, and as much as Rs200,000 (approx. U.S. \$10,000) for a larger explosion.

I wondered if there would be any payment for the Chinese rocket as we drove round a corner and were spotted by a middle-aged policeman hefting an old .303 Lee Enfield rifle. He waved us toward a cramped lane. We nosed through it and found ourselves in the building lot.

Out of the air conditioned car into a blast of heat, handshakes all round with a small police guard, and then Ghulam Hussain led the way to the smoking pile of sand. He stopped, looked at the hole and made his decision. "It's an incendiary rocket," he said briskly. "Find a length of reinforcing rod!"

His sergeant, Shah Naseem, went off and came back with 20 feet of straight, rusty steel.

"Put it into the hole!"

Shah Naseem gingerly slid it in. He was sweating.

"Go ahead!" Ghulam Hussain snorted. "It's not dangerous!"

Four feet, six inches down it gently hit something. "Is it knocking?" Ghulam Hussain demanded.

"Yes, sir."

"Good. Then pull out the steel and lay it along the line of the hole!"

Naseem pulled the rod out and laid it in the grass — in the exact direction the rocket had come from. "Ichini crossroad!" Ghulam Hussain announced to me with a grunt. "It was fired from Ichini. Five to five and a half kilometers away."

He turned to Shah Naseem. "Dig it out!"

That took some time. There was only one shovel on the site. And a few feet down the flammable material in the ruptured warhead sputtered to life. Flames roared out of the hole as the rocket gobbled up fresh air. The digging stopped until the rocket had burned itself into a smoking mass.

More digging brought the end of the rock-

et motor into view. Someone got a hose and cooled the metal. But nobody could actually get a purchase on the round end of the motor and pull it out. Even Ghulam Hussain climbed down into the now gaping trench to have a go.

More digging. Out came the motor. Then, bit by bit, the disintegrated warhead. Empty now — but sullen even in its impotence. The parts were washed. Thirty-three inches and 18.2 kilograms of punch. The motor and warhead were sent off to a police station, where they would be ready as evidence in the extremely unlikely event that the terrorists who had fired the rocket were ever caught.

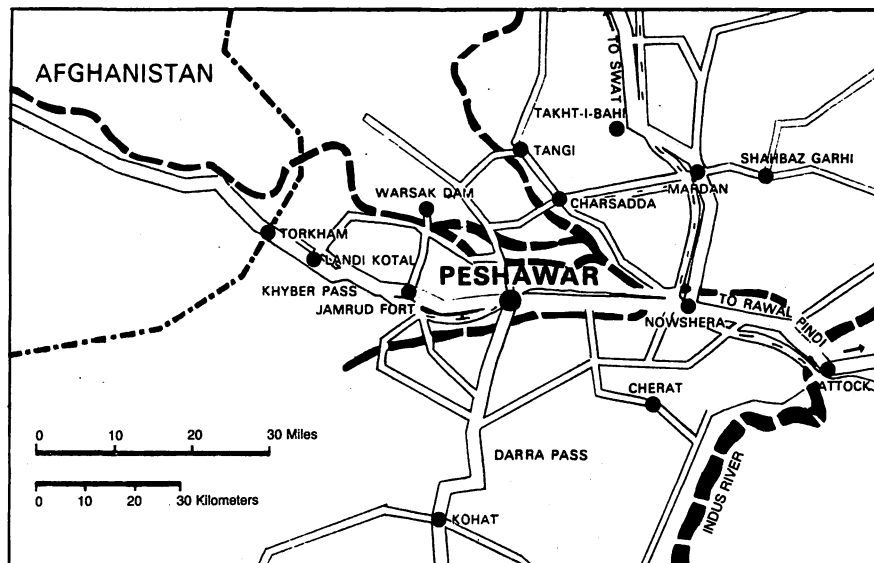
Ghulam Hussain and I climbed into the car and headed back to the small office he works from, just along the off-limits operations room at central police headquarters. Terrorists have made Peshawar their playground. And if there's one man standing between them and the people, it's this 58-year-old, grey-haired explosives expert. Young policemen are reluctant to sign up for duty with his squad. They think it's too dangerous. So the whole responsibility is left to 10 men like himself — retired army engineers who dispose of bombs in order to supplement their army pensions.

Ghulam Hussain grew up fascinated with guns and explosives in the wild, ungoverned Malakand Agency. To get there you drive north from Peshawar. Once past the Pak customs and police checkpoint at Siarkot, a touch more than an hour after leaving the safety of Peshawar, you're on your own in the Agency. Villages dot the plain. Up ahead, mountains guard the Valley of Swat. The bazaars are stocked with electronic goods from the Soviet Union and Japan, brought in by smugglers from depots at Landikotal and perhaps Jalalabad, over the border inside Afghanistan.

At the top of the Malakand Pass is the village of Thanna, Ghulam Hussain's ancestral home. It saw the bloody battles with the British in 1898 that the young Winston Churchill wrote up so glowingly for the Victorian press of England. And from it have come a surprising number of men who worked their way up to very senior posts in the Pakistan army.

Ghulam Hussain is part of this fighting tradition. He joined the army, graduated as an ammunitions technical officer in 1963, among other things did a five year stint in quality control in the big Pak ordinance factory at Wah, two hours west from Peshawar, and in 1975 came to the bomb disposal job on the border. Since then he has seen terrorism literally explode in Peshawar. Terrorism became increasingly sophisticated from 1978 as weapons sent in by the United States and others for the muj were diverted into local arms markets, where some were used against Pakistanis and Afghans in Peshawar.

In 1984 the bombings started in earnest. Then, terrorists used nothing more than hand grenades and crude improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Now they do things in style.



Leaving their refuge in tribal agencies on Afghanistan border, paid agents of WAD, Afghanistan secret police, launch rockets from north and west of Peshawar, and plant bombs and mines in the city.

Ghulam Hussain opened a cupboard in his office. Two Chinese-made RPG-7s were inside, both taken from saboteurs. Ghulam Hussain told me RPGs had been fired at a big government gasoline storage site at Nasir Bridge, near a large refugee camp on the edge of the Qabail, and at the Sukhi Bridge police outpost in the same area.

He took me out of his office to a small room at the end of the veranda. It was packed with boxes of plastic mines, ammunition and Chinese 107mm rockets. All courtesy of terrorists who'd fumbled.

Shah Naseem hefted up a Mark II SA-7 SAM onto his shoulder. Its glass eye glinted evilly in the gloom. "You can pick them up on the black market here for Rs500,000 [U.S. \$25,000]! Fire it at a plane, and it's a sure shot!" Ghulam Hussain said, thumping the black plastic cover back on the end of the deadly green tube. A Mark I was propped up in a corner.

The storeroom used to hold more. But earlier in the year the Ojhri ammo dump in Islamabad had gone up in a tremendous explosion that killed dozens, maybe hundreds, of people. Apparently the dump was a major supply depot for the muj. The explosion could have been triggered by saboteurs, or possibly by clumsy army men. Whatever had happened, Ghulam Hussain decided he wouldn't take chances. He didn't want a smaller repeat at his own office, so he'd sent most of the rockets, mines and ammunition away to an army dump. But even if the storeroom was safer now, I was glad to get out into the late morning sun again.

His squad is finding hand grenades all the time. I was sitting in his office one morning when two stick grenades were brought in. The necks were taped together. One activating wire was exposed. Terrorists had put this little package next to a house on the

edge of open ground where kids play, in Saddar Colony on Punda Road.

Ghulam Hussain shook his head. "Children or anybody might have pulled the wire!"

"What would the killing area have been?" I asked.

"It depends. But up to 20 meters."

But it's the IEDs that Ghulam Hussain is most involved with. Until earlier this year the bombs were almost always the same: simple Russian lead switches, longer lasting than Western chemical switches. Simple, unsophisticated — but deadly. And possibly not being used anywhere else in a terrorist zone. I say that because Ghulam Hussain took a set of the switches to a training program in the States in late 1987, only to find his handlers had never seen them before.

That training turned out to be next to useless. "I told them their training was not applicable to us. Our circumstances are different. They don't concentrate on the time device that goes into a bomb. They are more booby-trap oriented. So they will advise you not to touch the bomb, whereas we are more time conscious. We straight away go for the heart of the bomb in the shortest possible time.

"Their approach is different. Very scientific and equipment oriented. They can afford to be. They've got wheelbarrows and robots and work with closed-circuit television.

"But I don't believe in that. We're a poor country. We can't buy robots. And if we had them we would have to use them twice and thrice a day, so who would be maintaining them?"

"We're grateful. The Americans have given us vehicles and a few things."

The Pak Government bureaucrats have been less helpful. Funds for a Rs170,000 (U.S. \$8,500) electronic stethoscope were approved two years ago, he said. Yet the boys in the Ministry of Industry have still not released the money. The result is that Ghulam Hussain and his squad work with little more than hand pliers and tin cutters.

And courage. "You know," Ghulam Hussain leaned across his desk, "this work's 10 percent technical and 90 percent psychological.

"To defuse a bomb, a technician has to



ABOVE: Mirror fragments from mine recovered in the Kabul River. The device behind is a Soviet sensor unit used to command detonate directional fragmentation mines.

go to the bomb. He has to enter the killing area. There isn't any other way to do it.

"And he's going to get afraid. If you can overcome the fear of being blown up, you can defuse any bomb." Then, lowering his voice, "Or, if you're a saboteur and you can overcome the fear of being caught by the police, you can blow up anything.

"It's my very strong conviction and religious belief that for every individual there is a specified, preordained, preplanned, predestined second when he will die.

"That doesn't mean that the human instinct for survival isn't in me. Fear is with me. All the physical symptoms that are associated with fear come with me. I sweat. *My heart races.*

"But religion is the sublimation of instinctive behavior. There's a struggle in my mind when I go to a bomb. And I control my instinctive fear with my religious belief.

"Any time device can go off at any time. It may be a second left. It may be an hour. Every time it is unknown. It's equally dreadful. But you have to go to the killing area of the bomb to defuse it, like I told you.

"Personally, I don't recommend that all the time bombs be defused. If the area is secure, the people have shelter, and it may be detonated without much damage to property, then of course let it go off in its own time.

"Yet for us in the squad for these last seven years the sight of a bomb is irresistible. We just have to jump on it. Kill it before it kills. We can't control ourselves.

"We are determined not to do this next time. But every time . . . maybe its some sort of madness.

"Even my own seniors, . . . my super-

visor has admonished me a number of times. Don't go, he tells me. And I admonish myself. My children do. People don't expect me to go. I say, next time I won't go.

"Even now I say I won't go. But let us see the next bomb!

"I carry on my job."

The job is 99 percent time bombs. Some of them hardly big enough to put a black mark on a wall, like two that exploded harmlessly outside a couple of muj offices a few nights before our interview.

Others would frighten you. The 15-kilo monster that absolutely demolished a four-story hotel in the heart of the old city the night before our talk put the wind up me. Fourteen people were killed in that one, most of them muj, but a woman and child as well. I wondered how much that would be worth in Kabul's books?

Occasionally the squad has handled the relatively easily defused, wire-controlled devices, mostly on the railway lines where terrorists are running about an even battle with the police. The problem for the police is that almost all the trains out of Peshawar leave at night. So even with spotter trains running ahead, the first few miles of line outside Peshawar have become "dangerous," Ghulam Hussain said.

This summer Kabul upped the terrorism odds with sophisticated, previously unknown floating bombs. So far two have

been found. The first one exploded when a woman picked it out of the river near Michni village. The second one Ghulam Hussain deliberately detonated. They drifted down the Kabul River, which passes through the mountains between here and Afghanistan, runs past the Warsak Dam at the old British military fort of Michni, and spreads out over the plains near Peshawar before converging on the Indus River at the strategically vital Attock bridge.

They're army green, about a foot square, 6 inches deep, covered with Soviet markings and very professionally sealed — something like cookie tins. But instead of cookies inside, there is a sophisticated cluster of electronic components and a sizable piece of explosive. Just how much explosive, Ghulam Hussain doesn't know yet. They are new to him. But they've got a mirror inside, and so he's guessing they're remotely controlled devices.

"They mark a new phase in the war," he



said. Another new stage is about to begin inside Afghanistan — finding the hundreds of thousands of mines that the Soviets have planted in the approaches to villages and discarded military bases.

When the United Nation's Prince Sadrudin Aga Khan was in town during mid-summer, promoting U.N. plans to raise \$1.4 billion for the return of refugees and the rebuilding of their country, two of his staff made a special visit to Ghulam Hussain's office. They had a simple request: Would Ghulam Hussain train U.N. disposal parties to clear mine fields.

"I said, OK, but that I didn't have any facilities for training. We'd need a classroom, training aids, an explosion ground, and so on. They said they'd talk with their director and let me know."

Ghulam Hussain glanced at a corner of his room. Two white plastic mines glared back at him. Afghanistan was full of them. "They're non-detectable. They don't have

any metal in them. Just one fine steel pin, deep inside. When they're buried, no detector can pick them."

So he'd told the prince's envoys that returning refugees would have to make completely new pathways to their old villages. Then they should take shovels and slowly, carefully, ever so gingerly dig up all the fields and open land around their settlements. "There's no other way!"

Sending tanks in with flailing crabs or pushing 200-foot-long explosive snakes onto the mine fields might work in some places, but those are army techniques and would cost too much money. Anyway, they were utterly impractical for a whole country, he said.

"Extensive human effort, that's the only way," he said "They'll have to take risks."

He does — all the time. Policemen have been blown up by bombs. But only because they fiddled with them rather than calling the squad. None of Ghulam Hussain's men

After some digging, incendiary material is exposed to air and bursts into flames. Squad waits for this to die down.

have died on duty. However, early this summer Ghulam Hussain came uncomfortably close to it. His men telephoned him one weekend. There was a big bomb ticking away in a cooking oil tin outside the Kabuli police station in the Kissa Khanna bazaar, right in the commercial heart of the old quarter of Peshawar. Would Ghulam Hussain come and defuse it?

"Somehow they couldn't summon up the courage to go to it themselves." Ghulam Hussain did. He cut into the tin and reached for the switch.

"The moment I picked up the switch and threw it away it went off in the air. Meaning that hardly a couple of seconds had been left for the bomb to go off."

Peshawar will need more luck and guts like this as the terrorists' tempo steps up. ✂

FLYING FOR

SOF Debriefs Four Afghan Hip Pilots

by David Isby

ROTORBLADES of four Mi-17 Hip-H helicopters flashed in the Afghan sunlight. Their dull, weathered sand-and-spinach camouflage, each fuselage marked with a two- or three-digit buzz number and the national insignia of the quisling Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, provided little cover against the clear, blue sky. At 2,000 meters above ground level the loud whop-whop-whop of the Hips announced their presence down the valley. The noise alerted other Afghans, waiting anxiously on a mountain crest overlooking the valley. They checked their weapons one last time, in the adrenaline rush of nervous expectation. In the helicopters, 16 pairs of eyes were looking for the men on the mountain crest. Like them, the crews of the helicopters were all Afghans, as were their passengers.

The four helicopters were returning to Jalalabad airfield after a resupply mission to the Kabul regime garrison at Assadabad in the Kunar Valley. No one was relaxing. In the back of each Hip, two gunners held on to their flexible door-mounted 7.62x54R PKMB machine guns. It was November 1986, and the air war in Afghanistan was becoming more deadly for the men in the helicopters. Resistance 12.7mm DShKM "Dashika" and 14.5mm ZGU-1 "Ziqroiati" heavy machine guns, rare six years before, had now become

commonplace. Resistance gunners, to whom deflection shooting and the concept of leading a target was once alien, had learned through the harsh Darwinism of guerrilla war the skills and techniques of anti-aircraft warfare. The heavy machine guns were now backed up by heavier weapons; in the Kunar Valley, a few Oerlikon-designed single-barrel light 20mm cannon had been in action, especially around the besieged Kabul regime fort at Barikot. The year 1986 also brought more surface-to-air missiles to the hands of the Afghan resistance. A few British-made Blowpipe SAMs had been unsuccessfully used at the Battle of Zhawar in March. In the Logar Offensive in August, however, massed firing of Soviet-designed SA-7 SAMs by fighters of the two *Hezb-i-Islami* resistance parties led to heavy losses among Soviet and Kabul regime helicopters. Most important, the American-built Stinger SAM had entered combat. It was first used in Nangarhar Province, not far from where the Hips now were, on 26 September 1986, when three of a four-ship formation of Soviet Mi-24 Hinds had been shot down in quick succession, the survivor returning with the message that the essence of war in Afghanistan had changed. Throughout the next month, more Soviet helicopters and aircraft were lost to Stingers

12-ship formation of Soviet Mi-8 Hip-Cs, each carrying four 57mm rocket pods. Formations such as this were actually flown in Afghanistan before introduction of Stinger surface-to-air missiles. Photo: U.S. Navy

but none of the Kabul regime, whose crews kept a sharper lookout and relied on the automatic decoy flare-dispensers fitted to each helicopter.

"Missile! Left and high!"

The radio call came at the last instant. The Hip crews had been looking below, at the floor of the valley. This missile had been fired from above, from the mountain crest they had just passed. An SA-7, which needs to see its target against a background of sky, could never have been launched down on a target. Ignoring the decoy flares, the missile curved in on the lead Hip, exploding in a white-yellow blast seen but not heard over the engine noise in the other helicopters.

"I'm hit! Going down!"

It was the only message from the lead Hip. There were no survivors from the four aircrew and 15 troops flying as passengers in the chopper that became the Kabul regime air force's first Stinger casualty.

Watching from the left-hand seat of another Hip in the formation that day was *Turan* (Captain) Is'haq. Is'haq (not his real name, as with all Hip pilots) was to spend the next several months flying against increasing numbers of Stingers and Blowpipes, as Afghan resistance fighters, who already controlled 80 percent of the land of Afghanistan, now started to take back the sky over their country.

Who are the men who fly the Hips? They have much in common with the men who flew the Fokker triplanes of *Jasta 11* along with the Baron Von Richthofen or Mitsubishi Zero fighters in 1942: They had the right stuff long before any journalist learned the term. Even though they were fighting for dark and tyrannical regimes and were responsible for the deaths of many good men, these pilots were basically little different from those fighting against them, as has been shown in many amicable postwar reunions of combat pilots who were once bitter opponents. The Kabul regime helicopter pilots are in a more difficult situation. They are basically an adjunct of the

MI-8/17 HIP PERFORMANCE

(Second figures are for Mi-17 Hip-H where different.)

ENTERED PRODUCTION:	1966/80
MAXIMUM TAKE-OFF WEIGHT:	12,000/13,000kg
INTERNAL PAYLOAD	4,000kg
EXTERNAL PAYLOAD:	3,000kg
FUSELAGE LENGTH	18.31/18.42m
ROTOR DIAMETER	21.29m (5 blades)
ENGINES:	2x1, 500/1,900shp Isotov TB-2-117A/TV3-117MT turboshafts
MAX SPEED	260km/h
RANGE (LOADED)	460/495km
FERRY RANGE	950km
INITIAL CLIMB RATE	6.5m/sec
SERVICE CEILING	4,500/5,000m
HOVER CEILING	1,800m
TROOPS	32/36

MOSCOW



Soviet air force, fighting their own people, whereas the Germans or the Japanese could at least say they were fighting for their countries against foreign nations. The Kabul regime helicopter pilots are fighting *against* their country *for* a foreign nation. This is one reason why four Kabul regime helicopter aircrew — Is'haq, as well as Abdul, Hamid, and Ibrahim — are all now with the Afghan resistance. They came over in diffe-

rent ways — flew their helicopter, were shot down, or walked. They had stayed with the air force for a variety of reasons. Lack of opportunity to change sides played a role. Some used their position to work for the resistance, by passing information or by attacking targets they would deliberately miss or rendering their ordnance "safe" before delivering it. They were afraid that if they joined the resistance they would be

replaced by committed communists who would not pass information or miss targets.

The helicopter pilots of the Kabul regime will be *critical* in determining whether the regime can independently resist after the Soviets have left (if, indeed, they do leave). The Soviets certainly can turn over lots of helicopters to their erstwhile allies, but it is unlikely that they can find and keep enough trained helicopter crews to sustain the war

effort. The Kabul regime air force is by no means a pro-Soviet force. In 1986, the pilots of a Kabul regime fighter squadron at Shindand air base blew up their MiG-21 Fishbeds and then ran for the hills. In 1987, Kabul regime pilots rioted at Bagram air base. Clearly, the Soviets cannot make up slack by increasing the Kabul regime air force. There are few Afghans willing and able to fly helicopters for the Kabul regime.

All these Kabul regime helicopter pilots were in the 377th Helicopter Regiment, based at Kabul International Airport. In 1987, the 377th was responsible for Kabul regime helicopter operations in the east of Afghanistan south of the Hindu Kush. The 377th is a composite unit. It has three transport squadrons with a total of 22 to 42 Hips, (Mi-17 Hip-H models in 1987) and an attack squadron with six to 14 Hinds (Mi-25 Hinds in 1987). The numbers vary because losses throughout the war were heavy in the 377th. By 1982, it had lost all its prewar equipment. Of 16 Hinds in the 377th in 1984, before the Stingers arrived, 10 were destroyed within two years; of 70 Mi-17s supplied in 1984, 26 were destroyed in two years. The losses were heavier in 1986-88, and the 377th's personnel losses have included at least one commanding officer. The 377th lost six helicopters to Stingers and two to Blowpipes from October 1986 to July 1987. But Is'haq believes total communist air losses in the first year following the introduction of the Stinger were 150 lost to all causes.

The Soviets have not found a single answer to the Stinger, but have followed a multi-tier systems approach. On individual aircraft they have continued the use of countermeasures that originated against the less effective heat-seeking SA-7s that have been in combat since 1980. These include automatic decoy flare dispersers that are normally kept on whenever a helicopter is taking off, landing or in a high-threat area. Soviet fighter-bombers use the same flare dispersers. Transport aircraft use a larger flare, burning at 6,000 degrees C as opposed to the 3,000 degrees C of the flares used by the helicopters and fighter-bombers. Appearing on the spine of Soviet helicopters are "Hot Brick" infrared jammers. These are intended to emit infrared energy that barrages the seeker head of a missile so that it is unable to lock on to the emissions from the target aircraft. A system of baffles has been fitted around the exhaust of the turboshaft engine to reduce the infrared signature, making it more difficult for missiles to acquire the target and "lock-on." The 377th's Hinds, but not its Hips, were fitted in 1987 with a missile warning system designated "LIP." This is apparently a radar system and shows the bearing and range of an incoming missile so that evasive action can be taken. The problem with all these countermeasures is that they do not work against Stingers. Even against SA-7s their effectiveness was not complete. Hips dropping flares have been lost to the SA-7b.

Flying above the Stingers — the coun-



Ground crew loading helicopter's main battery — 57mm S-5 HE rockets — into 32-tube rocket pods. Photo: Courtesy David Isby

termeasure adopted by communist fighter bombers — is not possible in an Mi-17. Not only can they simply not fly high enough, but, Ibrahim said, in the 377th they would not use the onboard oxygen system for fear that ground fire might rupture a charged oxygen tank. Consequently, high-altitude flight was fatiguing and dizzying.

The communist helicopter crews thus had an interest in doing unto the Stingers before

they could do unto them. Locating resistance SAMs so that they could be destroyed by artillery, airstrikes, or special operations forces was a critical Soviet countermeasure. "The government promised any pilot who finds a place where there are Stingers or Blowpipes 150,000 afghanis [about \$3,000 U.S.],” Is'haq remembers, with both Kabul regime and Soviet aircrew being eligible for this reward.

In addition, helicopter attack missions would be directed against locations of suspected resistance anti-aircraft machine guns or SAMs. These were often detected when resistance crews opened fire on passing air-



ABOVE: Soviet Mi-17 Hip-H drops off motorized riflemen in air assault exercise. Photo: DoD

BELOW: Mi-17 Hip-H destroyed by RPG-7 while low flying during Jadji fighting, May 1987. Photo: Afghan Media Resource Centre



craft. Others are detected by reconnaissance. Is'haq explained: "Antonovs [twin-engine turboprops, flying above SAM range] and helicopters are used for reconnaissance. They go over mujahideen bases and photograph them. Then before an attack, they point out mujahideen positions to other pilots, then attack aircraft come and hit targets."

Is'haq also knew of the use of HUMINT (human intelligence) for targeting. KHAD (Kabul regime secret police, controlled by the Soviet KGB) would try to locate resistance air defenses, and KHAD agents would provide the target location on a map, or even by accompanying the helicopters on a strike. While the Kabul regime did not have a COMINT (communication intelligence) capability, Is'haq said the Soviets did, flying in Antonovs and big Mi-6 Hook helicopters. While resistance radio discipline was poor and secure voice capability extremely limited, the Soviets lacked language-qualified airborne intercept operators to exploit this.

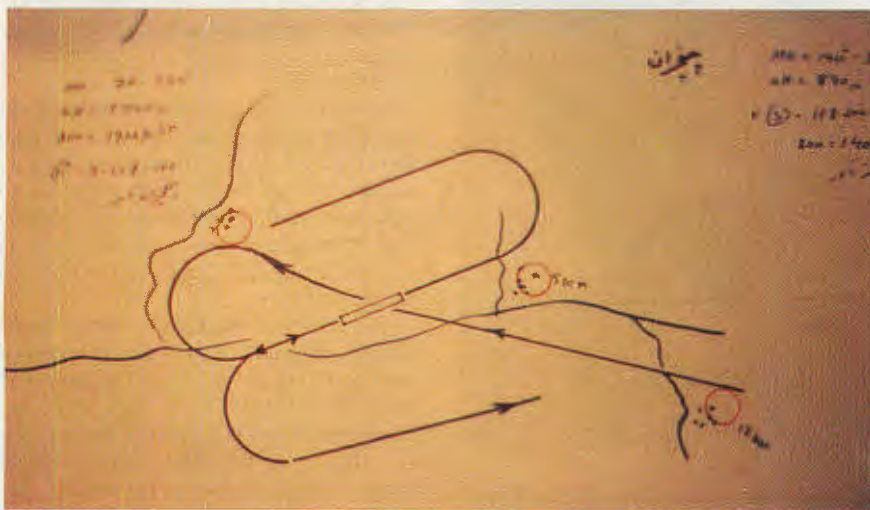
Is'haq knew the Soviets were working on improved SAM countermeasures: "None were tried yet, against Blowpipe or Stinger, on aircraft, but the Russians are trying to make a device against them [the SAMs]. The Russians try first to capture Stingers and are trying hard to do research in the Soviet Union."

The Blowpipe was not as effective as the Stinger, although it did not always seem that way to those on the receiving end. The missile itself is slow and training-dependent, because the gunner must literally "fly" it to the target, using a thumb trigger to keep the flare in the missile's tail and the target aircraft lined up together in the cross hairs. This is a difficult procedure, and training requires extensive use of simulators. But this guidance system also gave the Blowpipe a powerful psychological impact, because even though it was less accurate and effective than the Stinger, there were no technical countermeasures against the Blowpipe. The knowledge that nothing could be done against the Blowpipe was tremendously demoralizing in the 377th. When one new Soviet helicopter crew, stopping over at Kabul International, asked a veteran 377th pilot what the best countermeasure was against the Blowpipe, he replied only, "Read the Koran." While the Soviets provide a short Afghan-specific training course for all their helicopter aircrew sent to Afghanistan or to the units (both the air force and KGB border guards) stationed in the Soviet Union near the border, the Soviets took the Afghan's advice literally. Throughout Afghanistan, Soviet helicopter crews would read a verse of the Koran aloud before each mission and would then spit on their aircraft for luck. But by early 1987, Is'haq could see that "morale had gone down" among Soviet helicopter crews worse than his own regiment; evading imagined Stingers "without any shooting, two Soviet helicopters collided."

One counter that the Soviets use to the



VIP-transport version of Mi-8 Hip-C broken down inside hangar for maintenance. Photo: Courtesy David Isby



Resistance hand-drawn copy of approach path for communist airfield. This was used to position SAM teams to engage aircraft on landing or takeoff, when they were most vulnerable. This sort of expertise was provided by former Kabul regime aircrew working with the resistance. Photo: David Isby

Stingers and the Blowpipes is not available to the pilots of the 377th: night operations. Afghan helicopter pilots are usually not used for night flying. This is apparently due more to the need to keep an eye on them than any desire to avoid combat. Hamid says his unit was prohibited from overflying some Soviet installations in the Kabul area. Is'haq recalls, "when there was a 100 percent risk of danger, Afghan pilots would be sent. On safer operations, Soviet would be sent."

These flight restrictions did not reflect a lack of instrument qualifications. Once, Is'haq's unit was ordered to medevac a wounded Soviet advisor from the Kabul regime garrison at Chamkani, in Paktia Province, then completely under low cloud and well under minimum conditions. On the ground, the Soviet advisory team was afraid no helicopter could get through — until they heard the rotors above them. Then they told their Afghan allies that this was proof of the superior instrument flight capabilities of the Soviet air force. They had to change their tune very quickly when they saw that the glorious Soviet air force was socked in, and the medevac Hip was Afghan. The helicopter crew received promotions for some very nice flying.

Abdul flew Mi-8 Hip-Cs in the first year

of the war, flying from Kabul. He survived not only the ground fire, but the repeated purges of the officer corps in 1978-80, all the while passing information to the resistance. Abdul started out flying transport missions. He recalls that he would often ferry party activists to distant villages in 1978-79 to "educate" the locals in the glories of communism. He added that he would often have to fly back to the same village a few days later with a platoon of troops to pick up the activist's body.

Abdul was not a great fan of the Hip-C. It was hard to trim at low speeds, he said. "I had to use my left leg on the controls a lot to correct," he remembered. The Hip-C's hot-weather and high-altitude performance left much to be desired. While simple and robust, the Hip-C's major components had limited life, which strained the Kabul regime's capability to sustain its helicopters in action.

Abdul also recalled the Hip-C's landing gear as being relatively fragile; there were a number of accidents when landing gears collapsed on fully loaded helicopters brought into rocky landing zones, the rotor blades shattering and slicing through those waiting on the ground as the helicopter keeled over. Abdul avoided these mishaps, as well as the increasing resistance gunfire. The Mi-8s he flew lacked armor plate (unlike the Mi-17, which has 8mm external steel plates below the cockpit), protected fuel tanks, or a crash-worthy fuel system. For Abdul, the Mi-8 "was more a transport than a combat helicopter."

As the war escalated, Abdul started flying attack missions. Some Hips were fitted with gunsights and 250-kilogram, high-explosive bombs or pods of 32 57mm rockets on each of the Hip-C's four attachment points. "I would set the bombs on 'safe' before dropping them. The 57mm rockets were very inaccurate." A 12.7mm DShKM heavy machine gun was also mounted in the nose of some Mi-8s, supposedly for range-finding in rocket attacks. "When the tracers hit the target, we were supposed to fire the rockets, but it never worked that way."

But, soon after the Soviet invasion, Abdul could no longer play the dangerous game of a double agent. There had been Soviet advisors with the Afghan helicopter force since the 1950s, but in 1978-79 their numbers increased and after the December 1979 invasion, the Soviets took control. So Abdul, with his crew, decided to join the resistance and flew a Hip-C to Abdul's home village. His large family was waiting there to give him a hero's welcome. The Hip was camouflaged against possible air strikes, and the rocket pods were taken off and made into improvised ground launchers. Since 1980, Abdul has done his fighting on the ground, with the resistance.

Hamid was a flight engineer on an Mi-17 Hip-H when it was shot down in Jadjji, Paktia, in June 1986, when Soviet battlefield success was at its height. Hamid survived many of the most intense battles of the war in 1984-86 flying attack (using 57mm rockets) as well as air assault and resupply missions. In 1985, Chris Hooke, an Australian journalist, got to be on the receiving end of two Mi-17s making a rocket attack in Paktia, at a time when Hamid was operating there. The helicopters came over the top of a hill, about 500 feet above ground level, firing 57mm rockets six at a time at 500- to 750-meters' range — certainly not the minimum-exposure tactics that were in use by 1987. But by then the attack missions had become almost exclusively the responsibility of the Hinds.

Among the resupply missions were flights into the mountains of Nuristan — remote and distant, in the heart of the Hindu Kush between the Panjshir Valley and the

Pakistan border. The beneficiary of these flights was Sarwar Nuristani, who, while claiming to be a resistance leader, worked to fragment the Nuristan resistance, block lines of communication to the Panjshir Valley, and pass intelligence back to Kabul. It was the 377th's job to keep this useful mole well supplied with weapons and money. Both Hamid and Is'haq flew missions to deliver them.

When Hamid was in the 377th, there were 10 Soviet advisors in the unit: "They enjoyed full authority in the appointment and transfer of officers. They drew maps and plans and dispatched us through the regimental commander." This was typical of the advisor system throughout the Kabul regime military, in which the Soviets maintained day-to-day operational control. But by 1987, Is'haq found that the Soviet advisor strength in the 377th had been reduced to one man — Sarogen. His rank unknown (he wore a "sterile" Kabul regime flight suit), Sarogen was the shadow of the 377th's commanding officer, the Soviet-trained Lieutenant Colonel Assef, and he sat in the command room with him. Is'haq reports the relationship between the two men was friendly. Many Afghan aircrew, however, greatly resented the Soviets.

Ibrahim qualified as a helicopter pilot after finishing the full 21-month course of the Kabul regime's Air and Air Defense Force Academy, including pilot training at Mazar-e-Sharif (other helicopter pilots went to the Soviet Union for training). There were 67 helicopter pilots in Ibrahim's class who graduated in 1982. When he joined the resistance in 1985, 32 of them were still alive.

While he was with the 377th, Ibrahim flew mainly resupply missions to communist outposts throughout Afghanistan — Panjshir Valley, Khost, Gardez, Barikot, and Asmar — always armed with at least one nose-mounted machine gun and four 57mm rocket pods, plus one or two door-gunners when the load permitted. Formations of two to 12 Hips were used, hauling in food, ammunition, and passengers, and frequently bringing out dead and wounded. The Mi-17s flew in two-ship elements and four-ship flights. None of the four Afghans reported the 377th using the three-ship elements and five-ship flights the Soviets have been reported as sometimes using. Flights operate either in trail or line (75 to 90 meters between aircraft), echelon, or staggered trail. A variation of the standard "fluid four" formation seems to be common, with multiple flights either following in trail or being stepped up above.

Sometimes, the landing zone at the smaller outposts was under so much resistance fire that the helicopters were unable to land but rather had to drop their supplies from 1,000 meters' altitude while moving. However, unlike the twin-turboprop Antonov transports also used for these missions, the 377th's Mi-17s had no targeting sight to help the crew see where they were dropping their cargo. In 1984, Ibrahim was among the crews tasked with dropping food to a

besieged Kabul regime outpost in Jadji, Paktia Province. Even at 1,000 meters they found resistance fire heavy and, aimed purely by rough windage, few of the bags of food landed within 200 meters of the outpost. Ibrahim had only a limited 50-degree downward view from the Mi-17's cockpit and could not see below and behind at all (hence the need for someone in the rear to look for enemy gunfire or SAMs), and this hindered accuracy. After dropping only three bags of food, Ibrahim's "kicker," who was pushing the bags out of the rear

door of the Mi-17, was hit and killed by ground fire, forcing Ibrahim to return to base. The garrison eventually fell from lack of food.

The experience of the Soviet aircrews in Afghanistan must be close to that of these four Afghans. But it may well be, when Soviet helicopters are long gone from the skies of Afghanistan, helicopters of the Afghan air force — a free Afghan air force — will continue their difficult tasks, but this time, in peace. ✎



MI-8/17 HIP STATS

The Mi-8/17 Hip — a large, unarmored, turbine-powered aircraft — is the standard Soviet transport helicopter and is the helicopter that has equipped the 377th throughout the war. The Hip has a conventional all-metal, semi-monocoque fuselage with a tricycle landing gear. Some Soviet versions (but not those supplied to the Afghans) are fitted with a Doppler radar for low-altitude navigation; the antenna is mounted under the tail boom. In addition to one large passenger door, there is a rear clam-shell door plus a hook and winch for external use.

The Mi-8 Hip-C that Abdul flew (designated Mi-8T in Soviet service) entered production in 1962. It can carry 12 stretchers in the medevac role. The outriggers have a total of four hard points. The other Afghans flew the Mi-17 Hip-H, which replaced the Hip-C as the Kabul regime's standard assault and transport helicopter. It incorporates components and systems developed for the Haze ASW helicopter. Up-engined, its outriggers have triple hard points as on the Hip-E. The tail rotor is shifted to the port side. The cargo hold is slightly enlarged. Dust deflectors and improved single-engine performance (2,200 shp possible in single-engine operation) makes it more efficient in combat operations.

Hips carry armament internally and on the hard points of the outriggers; their circular portholes usually have gunports for passengers to use their weapons. Internal armament can consist of a 12.7mm or 7.62x54R machine gun

Commercial versions of Mi-8 Hip-C all have military roles on mobilization.

Photo: U.S. Navy

mounted under the cockpit. Soviet Hip-Es operating in Afghanistan, presumably in the attack role, have a long-barreled, 30mm grenade launcher, believed similar to the AGS-17, mounted in the same way, but they never provided this weapon to their Afghan allies. Hips in Afghanistan also have one or two rearward-firing PKMB 7.62x54R machine guns on a flexible mount in the doors. Each hard point can carry one 250 kilogram bomb, chemical weapons canister, 57mm rocket pod, or TKAB-481 12.7mm machine-gun pod. Sagger antitank guided missile (ATGM) launch rails can be carried as well. Hips drop PFM-1 "Butterfly" antipersonnel mines from two external containers on the fuselage sides, each with a 144 mine capacity. Hips can be used to produce smokescreens.

Maneuverability of the Hip is limited compared to that of the most recent Western helicopters. Hip-Cs are prohibited from negative-G maneuvers. At least in the early stages of the war, Abdul reported that Kabul regime Hip-Cs had to shut down their engines to refuel, the "hot" refueling familiar in NATO operations being prohibited. This was a safety consideration — the Soviets did not have the same limitations. Performance of the Hip-C is marginal when loaded in hot weather at high altitude landing zones.

SOF ELECTRONIC WARFARE

NAVY WIZARDS

Smoke and Mirrors in Defense of the Fleet



by John B. Dwyer

YOU could make it out now and then, just over the horizon, north of the U.S. carrier group in the South China Sea. Seventh Fleet sailors in 1967 knew the configuration well. The harmless looking ship had been shadowing them since they'd taken station in the Gulf of Tonkin preparatory to launching air strikes against North Vietnam.

But it wasn't as harmless as it looked. It was a Soviet intelligence-gathering trawler bristling with antennae. Since the early 1960s the ubiquitous vessels had appeared on the scene to monitor activities like Polaris submarine sea trials and nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific range.

Aboard the destroyer USS *Jenkins* a lieutenant studied the trawler through his binoculars. He'd seen it during previous duty in the Sea of Japan. Though it was the enemy, he'd come to have a grudging respect for their capabilities. He and his men had analyzed carrier-based aircraft communication circuits and learned that pilots and combat air controllers were such creatures of habit that they used the same code words repeatedly on bombing missions. It was a pattern that Soviet listeners on the trawler soon deciphered. The familiar words were easily associated with a location or combat tactic and connected with the same ones used on previous sorties. A pathfinder aircraft, for instance, might declare a primary target as closed-in and would then OK the secondary one by an identifiable code word. Trawler technicians only had to radio that data to NVA antiaircraft units at the secondary target areas where they'd be waiting for Navy jets. As soon as the lieutenant got the information he was waiting for he and his men would be able to deny the trawler that vital data and any other intelligence it might obtain from the carrier's operations.

As he walked back to his cubbyhole, actually a portable, secure communications shelter installed at Subic Bay, some of the destroyer men who'd seen him before wondered who he was. Nobody they'd talked to had a clue.

Before making it back to his "office," the lieutenant was hailed by a yeoman who informed him he was wanted in the radio shack. The coded message he was given, relayed from the carrier, was, he knew, from a Naval Security Agency signals intelligence source. De-crypted, it told him what he needed to know — the frequency or channel being used by the intelligence trawler and the time frame during which it was actively engaged in monitoring and recording fleet operations.

Crammed inside the secure shelter space was a row of "black boxes," in this case

UNCONVENTIONAL NAVY OBSERVER

This is John Dwyer's sixth article for *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine. A Vietnam veteran, Dwyer specializes in maritime special operations. His previous articles include "Navy SEALs in Libya," February '88, "Surface Action," May '87, "Swamp Warrior," December '86, "UDTs in Korea," September '86, and "SEAL Saga," October '85.

Double-hulled, 63-foot, air-sea rescue boat, primary support craft of Beach Jumpers in World War II. Photo: National Archives



Leaving Hollywood for the Navy, Douglas Fairbanks Jr. was instrumental in convincing the Navy to create Beach Jumpers. After service with Admiral Louis Mountbatten's combined operations staff (which controlled commando operations), Fairbanks became convinced of need for special units to support amphibious operations. Photo was taken while Fairbanks, then lieutenant commander, was serving as special operations officer for 8th Fleet in August 1944. Photo: courtesy Capt. Douglas Fairbanks Jr., USNR (Ret.)

sophisticated, high-power jammer transmitters. They were operated by a team of highly skilled specialists who, like the lieutenant, were members of Beach Jumper Unit One, Western Pacific Detachment. Based at Subic Bay, Philippines, and Futenma, Okinawa, they were part of a group of elite electronic warriors deployed, ashore and afloat, to Vietnam since 1966.

When the destroyer had maneuvered as directed, several hundred yards away from and aside the trawler with the carrier *abaft*, the Beach Jumpers got down to business.

In World War II they called it "barrage jumping." Injecting more meaning into the phrase, the BJU-1 team termed it "down the throat jamming." And that's exactly what they did. With their highly directional antennae aimed at the trawler, six jammer transmitters with special modulators were turned on. Blasted into the ears of flinching Soviet listeners, and no doubt eliciting a salty flow of Russian expletives, was a variety of bagpipe-sounding, shift-pulse or random noise that wrecked the trawler's intelligence gathering mission. *Ivan* would learn nothing about 7th Fleet carrier operations — U.S. Navy Beach Jumpers would make sure of that.

What came to be called Beach Jumpers (itself a cover name) was one of several

special naval units formed in 1942-1943 to support amphibious operations. Borrowing a concept from the British and adapting it to their own needs, the U.S. Navy trained specialist volunteers at Camp Bradford, Virginia, and Ocracoke Island, North Carolina, to man Beach Jumper Units One through Nine as secret tactical cover and deception teams. The mission of these unique units was to utilize special devices and techniques to deceive, divert and confuse the enemy as to the actual time and place of amphibious landings . . . making them believe, for instance, that instead of it happening at Point A, the assault would actually occur at Point B, 100 miles to the west.

From 1943 to 1945 the BJ's, as they called themselves, operated from lightly armed 63-foot air-sea rescue boats, PT (Patrol Torpedo) boats and LCIs (Landing Craft, Infantry) in special task groups. Using sonic deception "heaters" (which broadcast the recorded sounds of assault landings — clanking anchor cables, creaking tanks, etc.), towed naval balloons with attached radar reflectors (which made small boats look like

cruisers on enemy radars), chaff-filled rockets, communications deception, pyrotechnics and jammers, they successfully deceived the Germans and Japanese from Salerno and southern France to the Philippines in daring night missions.

Disestablished after World War II, BJ units were reconstituted in July 1951 as Beach Jumper Unit One, at Naval Amphibious Base (NAB) Coronado, California, and Beach Jumper Unit 2, at NAB Little Creek, Virginia. The BJ's were placed under the commanders of the Amphibious Forces, Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. The Navy put the Beach Jumpers at the lead of a special warfare initiative to meet the new strategic and tactical challenges of the Cold War era. Commando and advanced electronic warfare capabilities would be added to their tactical cover and deception mission. Unfortunately, the Korean conflict, which had first priority on resources and manpower, negated most of that ambitious program. But the BJ's nevertheless made valuable contributions; playing the aggressor force, simulating nuclear explosions during scheduled fleet amphibious exercises, testing communications security, and evaluating new hydrofoil craft. As ever, they were a versatile force.

At one point the commanding officer of BJU-2, Lieutenant Commander Phil Bucklew (a highly decorated World War II Scout

& Raider veteran and experienced special warfare operator), was summoned to the Pentagon. He was asked if he could rig a fishing boat with suitable electronic gear and sail it into the Caspian Sea to monitor Soviet Fleet maneuvers. Though he didn't relish the job, Bucklew replied that, though he'd have to start the project from scratch, fitting out the vessel, he could do it. Apparently it was a case of the super-secret National Security Agency assessing an option. Bucklew never heard anything more about it. The event points out, however, that as far back as the mid-50s, the Navy and other government agencies appreciated the kinds of electronic warfare capabilities the BJ's were developing. Already they had jammers so powerful that, if used anywhere near their bases, they'd have wiped out communications for large sections of the coast.

During that same period, the BJ's trained aboard such submarines as the USS *Sea Lion* (APSS-315) so that they could be clandestinely inserted and extracted.

In October 1963, U.S. naval special warfare came of age with the establishment of Naval Operations Support Group, Pacific (special warfare training and efforts, especially those focused on Southeast Asia, were now concentrated on the West coast) which placed under one commissioned command all special warfare units — UDT (Underwater Demolition Team), SEAL (Sea, Air and Land) teams, Boat Support Units and the Beach Jumpers.

Equipment and operational techniques were developed and employed as required to conduct not only tactical but strategic deception in support of U.S. national policy objectives. This would invariably involve the BJ's in clandestine or covert electronic special warfare. Beach Jumper personnel were called upon to provide planning in their field of expertise for the chief of naval operations and for all major fleet staffs. BJU-1 and its Western Pacific Detachment, which was manned on a rotating six-month basis, for instance, gave planning support to the staffs of the Commander-in-Chief Pacific (CINCPAC), Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) and Seventh Fleet.

The war in Vietnam provided a unique challenge to the officers and men of BJU-1. Their mission at the time, as stated, was: "Assisting operating fleet forces in providing tactical cover and deception in support of naval warfare; conducting manipulative and imitative deception, and transmitting psychological warfare material by radio or sound."

In the first place they had to tailor that mission to the particular requirements of unconventional warfare. They then had to carry out tasks with a minimum of personnel

Aboard such destroyers as USS *Jenkins*, Western Pacific Detachment of Beach Jumper Unit One supported 7th Fleet operations during war in Vietnam. Photo: DoD

Change of command ceremony, Beach Jumper Unit One, July 1966. At right is Captain Phil Bucklew, a legend in Navy special warfare community, for whom Navy Special Warfare Center is named. Photo: DoD



and assets. As it turned out, the BJ's were limited to conducting primarily psychological warfare (psywar) and electronic countermeasures (ECM) operations.

Psychological Warfare: Though limited in what they could accomplish, BJ's did what they could conducting psywar activities, especially in support of operations in the Mekong Delta. They would, for example, use backpack-portable, 250-watt loudspeaker-telephone sets to broadcast psywar material from aboard river patrol boats (PBRs) or while in the field with SEAL squads to either shake up the VC, or, at other times, for the benefit of the civilian population.

Also in the Delta, BJ teams would accompany SEALs for special sensor emplacement missions. After being led by SEALs to a known VC trail, the BJ's would get to work and set out highly sensitive acoustic and seismic intrusion detectors (Acousids). These devices had microphones at the base of their antennae which could be activated by remote control. Being able to monitor VC movement with Acousids, and having the intelligence data they provided, sometimes gave SEALs the edge they needed to plan effective ambushes, while also letting them generally keep tabs on the enemy.

While their World War II forebears were able to use manipulative deception techniques successfully and often, it was a different situation for the BJ's in Vietnam.

In one case they drew up a plan to fool North Vietnamese intelligence observers by feeding them false information that would keep NVA ground forces off balance enough to delay or prevent a possible attack. However, the plan was never executed since it required a level of sophistication and knowledge the South Vietnamese army just didn't have. But then, even when BJ officers approached U.S. Army field commanders with suggestions or plans for deception operations that they could have conducted, they discovered that most of those commanders wanted nothing to do with them.

As has been stated, the BJ's were short on personnel and assets. This meant that the kinds of missions just described had to be, for them, nothing more than sidelights. It was at sea, aboard suitable platforms, usually destroyers, that the officers and men of BJU-1 made their most valuable contributions not only off the coast of Vietnam but throughout the Pacific theater with their forte, electronic countermeasures. Even before deploying to Vietnam there were BJ teams aboard 7th Fleet carrier strike-force ships ready to conduct a vital countermeasure mission.

After the Korean conflict and through the early 1960s, carrier strike forces operating off the coasts of the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union represented a primary deterrent against attack by the Soviets. As a result, those carriers were principal targets for the Soviets. Aware of this, the Navy called upon the Beach Jumpers to work up a tactic to protect the flattops.



September 1969. Sailors from Beach Jumper Unit One train with 250-watt, man-portable loudspeaker and portable telephone of type used in Vietnam. Photo: DoD

They called it the "missile trap."

The main threat to carriers was air-launched missiles, specifically, radar-guided "beam riders." In the event one was ever fired at a carrier, BJ teams aboard a destroyer in the vicinity were prepared to make their ship a missile trap. The scenario went like this.

If and when the BJ's detected enemy aircraft illuminating the carrier force with their radars, they prepared to initiate countermeasures. Should an aircraft achieve "lock on," signifying it was about to launch a missile, BJ's would immediately start sending signals up the beam of a launched missile. Since the missile was being guided initially by data from the aircraft and programmed to ride its radar beam on left, right, up or down vectors, the BJ's countered with exactly opposite signals. If their equipment "read" the aircraft's guidance signals telling the missile to go left, it would send a stronger signal telling it to veer right. By these guidance-confusing radar countermeasures it was hoped that eventually the missile would fall off harmlessly into the ocean. But, if it reached what was called the "cross over" point without having been

thrown off course, then the destroyer became, in effect, a missile trap — the missile's own radar homing in on the signals being sent by the BJ's. Sacrifice a destroyer, save a carrier.

When these missions were first given to the BJ's by the Navy, the missile-trap team officer in charge worked on a need-to-know basis, meaning the destroyer's skipper wasn't aware that, if it came to it, his ship would become a missile decoy to be purposely damaged or sunk. Luckily for everyone concerned it was a situation that never occurred.

In other operations aboard *destroyers* with carrier task forces, BJ teams played passive and active countermeasures deception games with Soviet coastal listening posts.

In the passive mode an entire task force, carrying out a Beach Jumper plan, would go completely electronically silent in the Sea of Japan. From the sudden vacuum thus created, BJ's were able to assume hostile radar radiations, pick out radio call signs and various telltale electronic "fingerprints" up to 500 miles away.

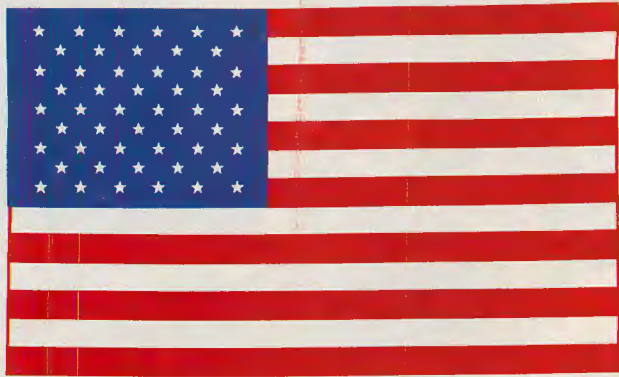
Then, to confuse and deceive those same shore-based monitoring stations, BJ's went on the attack. Using sophisticated equipment they themselves had developed to cover certain task-force operations, they proceeded to feed those stations the signals and

Continued on page 74

BLOOD CHITS

Aviators' Last Hope Resurrected for Good Cause

by SOF Staff



ENGLISH

I am a citizen of the United States of America. I do not speak your language. Misfortune forces me to seek your assistance in obtaining food, shelter and protection. Please take me to someone who will provide for my safety and see that I am returned to my people. My government will reward you.

BURMESE

ကျွန်ုပ်တို့သည် အမေရိကန် ပေါ့ဒေါ့နိုင်ငံမှ နိုင်ငံသား ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့သည် မိမိတို့၏ နိုင်ငံသားများကို အကူအညီပေးနိုင်ရန် အတွက် အကူအညီတောင်းဆိုပါသည်။ အစားအသောက်၊ အိမ်ထောင်စုနှင့် ကာကွယ်ရေးအတွက် အကူအညီပေးရန် အတွက် အကူအညီပေးပါ။ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့၏ အသက်အဘယ့်အတွက် အကူအညီပေးပါ။ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့၏ အသက်အဘယ့်အတွက် အကူအညီပေးပါ။ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့၏ အသက်အဘယ့်အတွက် အကူအညီပေးပါ။

THAI

ข้าพเจ้าเป็นพลเมืองอเมริกัน ไม่สามารถพูดภาษาของคุณได้ ขอความช่วยเหลือในการหาอาหาร ที่พัก และความปลอดภัย โปรดนำข้าพเจ้าไปยังผู้ที่สามารถให้ความช่วยเหลือแก่ข้าพเจ้า และพาทางส่งข้าพเจ้ากลับบ้านเมืองของข้าพเจ้ากับรางวัลของข้าพเจ้าที่มอบให้แก่ข้าพเจ้าตามสมควร

LAOTIAN

ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ ເປັນຜູ້ອາເມຣິກັນ . ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ ບໍາກາຍສາຂອງທ່ານບໍ່ໄດ້ . ເລາະຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ ໄດ້ຍັງຕ້ອງໄດ້ ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ ມາຫາຄວາມຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອຈາກທ່ານ ຈະເປັນເລື່ອງດີ ທີ່ ໃຫ້ເຮົາຮູ້ທ່ານໄດ້ ທີ່ ໃຫ້ທ່ານເປັນຜູ້ຮັກສາ ຢ່າງໃດກໍດີ . ຈົ່ງຮູ້ອີກນຳ ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ ໄປຫາຜູ້ໃດຜູ້ໜຶ່ງ ທີ່ ຈະໃຫ້ຄວາມຍອດໃນ ເຫຼາະຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ ໄດ້ ແລະ ຈະຮັບບາງສິ່ງ ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ ຈາກນັ້ນເມື່ອທ່ານມີຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອເມືອກັນ . ຮັບບາງສິ່ງ ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າ ຈະມີເຫຼາະນາຍຕຸກທ່ານ .

AMERICAN

ខ្ញុំជាអាមេរិកាំង ខ្ញុំមិនអាចនិយាយភាសាអ្នកបានទេ

CAMBODIAN

ខ្ញុំជាអាមេរិកាំង ខ្ញុំមិនអាចនិយាយភាសាអ្នកបានទេ ខ្ញុំត្រូវការការជួយដើម្បីរកបានស្បៀង ទីស្នាក់នៅ និងការការពារខ្លួនខ្ញុំ។ ប្រសិនបើអ្នកអាចជួយខ្ញុំបាន ខ្ញុំនឹងសរសេរសំបុត្រថ្វីដៃដល់រដ្ឋាភិបាលរបស់ខ្ញុំ ដើម្បីថ្កោលទោសអ្នក និងផ្តល់រង្វាន់ដល់អ្នក។

VIETNAMESE

Tôi là một người Mỹ. Tôi không nói được tiếng Việt. - Giúp trước không may tôi phải nhờ sự giúp đỡ của bạn. Nếu được, xin hãy đưa tôi đến một người nào có thể che chở cho tôi và đưa tôi về nước. Chính phủ chúng tôi sẽ đền ơn cho quý ông.

MALAYAN

Saya adalah orang Amerika Bersekut. Saya tidak dapat berbahasa Enchik. Kemungkinan memaksa saya minta bantuan Enchik, untuk mendapat makan, tempat tinggal, dan perlindungan. Sudi Enchik membawa saya pada seorang yang dapat menjamin keamanan saya, dan mengembalikan saya kepada negari saya. Pemerintah saya akan memberi hadiah pada Enchik.

INDONESIAN

Saya adalah warga-negara Amerika Serikat. Saya tidak dapat mempergunakan bahasa saudara. Kemungkinan yang terpaksa diri saya ialah memaksa saya meminta pertolongan saudara, untuk memperoleh makanan, tempat tinggal serta perlindungan. Sudi kiranya saudara membawa saya pada seorang yang akan dapat menjamin keamanan saya, dan mengemukakan supaja saya dikembalikan kepada negari saya. Pemerintah saya akan memberi hadiah pada saudara.

CHINESE

不幸的食領和物，我要求會說
府國全你食幸不
必的和領物，要會我
大人設我住求說是
大那法到所你中美
酬裡送能和幫國國
謝美我給保我話公
你國回我護獲我民
們政美安請得不我

CHINESE (MODERN)

我是美国人民。我不会說中国話。

Wǒ shì Měiguó Rénmín. Wǒ bù huì shuō Zhōngguó huà.

我不要你請你幫助我找到糧食，住所
Wǒ bù xiǎo yào qǐng nǐ bāngzhù wǒ zhǎodào liángshí, zhùsuǒ

和保護。請你用我能夠給我安全
hé bǎohù. Qǐng nǐ yòng wǒ nénggòu gěi wǒ ānquán hé

想法註我回去美國的人那里。美國的
xiǎngfǎ zhù wǒ huíqù měiguó de rén nǎlǐ. měiguó de

政府一定多給錢謝謝你們。

zhèngfǔ yīdìng duōgěi qián xièxiè nǐmen.

TAGALOG

Acco'y Americano. Hindi ako maranang mag salita nang tagalog. Napatipilhan ako nang sacaco sa pag hingi sa iyo nang halang sa pag caha nang pagcan, malililihan al pagtagal. Pakikinanap ma acco nang tao na macaculang sa akin at macaculang sa akin na malilik acco sa akin. Ang akang pamahalaan mag babigay nang ganting pata sa iyo.

VISAYAN

Acco Americano. Dili ako ma-antiga ma bisaya. Dautang kapalaran nagapigan canaco pag hingya ago labangan unta acco sa pag caha ug pagcan, balay nga ca pahawayan ug panatipil. Patihog daco acco can ca bisan kinsa nga mao panatipil canaco ug mao tabang pag uk canaco sa accang mga kaubonan. Ang accang gobierno ma ganit canimo.

FRENCH

Je suis un citoyen des Etats Unis d'Amérique. Je ne parle pas votre langue. Malheureusement je suis obligé de vous demander de m'aider à trouver de la nourriture, un abri et de la protection. Avez l'obligeance de me mener chez quelqu'un qui veillera à ma sécurité et qui s'occupera de me renvoyer dans mon pays. Mon gouvernement vous récompensera.

DUTCH

Ik ben een burger van de Verenigde Staten van Amerika. Ik kan Uw taal niet spreken. Mogeval heeft mij gedwongen Uw hulp te vragen om voedsel, heilich en bescherming. Wilt U zo goed mij naar iemand brengen, die voor mijn veiligheid zal zorgen, en mij terug te brengen naar mijn eigen land. Mijn Government zal U belonen.

“WRAPPING oneself in the flag” is a term usually reserved for those of dubious intent who would identify themselves with the Flag, Mom, Apple Pie or something else of undoubtable purity in order to establish innocence-by-association. But there have been those who wrapped themselves in the flag for other reasons. At the last stand at Gundamak during the British retreat from Afghanistan in 1842, Captain Souter of the 44th Foot (see “Afghan Death March,” SOF, February ’89) wrapped the colors around himself in order that he might save them — but when he was captured the flag saved *him*, as the Afghans reasoned he must be tremendously important to wear the flag, so they spared him to trade for enormous ransom.

About a hundred years later, the Brits were again fighting in Afghanistan, this time flying 30's-era planes while Pathan rebels along the Indian frontier were demonstrating there was no end to their skill in winging low-flying aircraft with rusty Enfields. RAF crews always carried special papers which promised safe conduct and a large cash reward for any tribesman who would deliver the downed flyer intact to British lines. Armed with these documents, captured airmen were an infinitely better insurance risk than captured ground pounders, although immunity from live dismemberment was not *absolutely* certain.

Military aviators have carried survival kits of one sort or another almost as long as they have been fighting in the air. When they began fighting in the air above terrain which friendly forces did not occupy, one of the best survival tools proved to be positive identification in several languages which would solicit help and/or promise rewards to those assisting the downed aviator with his physical needs and safe return to his people.

After Jimmy Doolittle flew B-25s from a carrier and bombed Japan in 1942 and then headed his bomber force north to crash-land in China, he found his way to a Nationalist Chinese army unit. When the Chinese officer heard Doolittle's story that he had flown

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Beautifully framed and suitable for display in den, office or collection, these Blood Chits are the genuine article, in mint condition.

AS reported in the July '88 issue of *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*, the U.S. Army has adopted a new sniper weapon system (SWS), the M24. In the opinion of this author and others experienced in this field, the Army has adopted a sniper weapon system that is badly flawed. If that were not enough, by any reasonable comparison the Army is also paying nearly twice what it should have to pay!

First, let me corroborate that the M24 does not lack in accuracy. In fact, it is an extremely accurate sniper rifle. However, although all good sniper rifles are accurate, not all accurate rifles are good sniper rifles. The rigors of combat demand that a military sniper rifle be rugged, reliable, field-maintainable, and flexible enough in design to meet the wide variety of missions it may have to fulfill. I seriously question whether the M24 meets these criteria.

Let us first examine the rifle's action. The rifle is built on what appears to be a standard Remington M700 long action. This is a superb sporting rifle action, one of the strongest and safest actions ever made. It also has an extremely fast lock time. However, as the basis for a general-purpose military sniping rifle, it has major shortcomings. The extractor is entirely satisfactory for a sporting rifle, but it leaves much to be desired for military use. Should the extractor break, the sniper may well have his rifle out of commission — with no way of readily putting it back in commission unless he carries an additional bolt, because replacing the M700 extractor requires special tools. Compare this with the French FRF2 sniper rifle or the British L96A1 sniper rifle where the extractor of either can be replaced in less than a

SOF SPECIAL WEAPONS

SNIPER SNAFU

U.S. Army's M24 SWS Defeated by Design

by Chuck Karwan

DRAWING A BEAD FROM EXPERIENCE

Chuck Karwan is a graduate of West Point, Ranger School, Panama's JOTC, airborne and jumpmaster schools, and the Special Forces Officer's Course. He served in Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), and the 10th and 5th Special Forces Groups. He has authored over 100 articles and is a monthly columnist for *Gun World* and *Shooting Industry* magazines. He is a frequent contributor to *Soldier of Fortune*.

minute without special tools. If the M700 extractor almost never broke, this would not be too important, but my interviews with gunsmiths indicate that the M700 extractor *does* break. This is not surprising because of its relatively small size and thin construction and the stress placed on it by the

strong camming action upon opening the M700 bolt. Gunsmith Kerry Gleezen, for example, told me he had recently attended a Remington seminar where a major topic of discussion among the gunsmiths there was the high incidence of Remington extractors breaking. Gleezen plies his trade in a state where shotguns are the regulation deer weapon, but in spite of this he has replaced several M700 extractors over the years. Indeed, Remington Model 700 extractors break often enough on sporting rifles that the B-Square Company has found it financially feasible to market a special tool enabling gunsmiths to install new extractors in Remington bolts. As it costs \$32, it is unlikely gunsmiths would buy this tool if there were no demand to replace broken extractors, and Brownells (a leading U.S. gunsmith supplier) told me they have sold "quite a lot" of this item.

New M700 bolts have been redesigned to allow replacement with only a notched screwdriver. Does this mean the M24's extractor is then field-replaceable if the sniper carries this tool and a spare extractor? Gleezen says, "Maybe, but if you're going to try that in the field, you'd better have a *pocketful* of extractors." Because of the strong camming action on opening of the M700 bolt, tremendous force is exerted by the extractor; with a combat-dirty or rusted chamber you can either tear the base off the cartridge or break the extractor.

It goes without saying that a good soldier should never let his chamber get rusty . . . but it happened to me in Vietnam on a sniper mission when we had to pull out under fire and keep moving until the next morning. By the time I had a chance to clean the weapon, it had a rusted chamber. Since a military sniping rifle can be expected to get much more use under far more difficult conditions than any sporting rifle, one

could expect extractor breakage to occur often enough (in a military arm, *at all* is often enough) to present a problem. I find it particularly questionable that the M24 combines both a vulnerable extractor with the fact that it cannot be readily replaced. This is especially so since totally satisfactory, stronger extractor designs, which can be easily replaced, have been around since before the turn of the century and are currently available off-the-shelf.

One of the major reasons given to justify replacing the M14-based M21 sniper system with a new system was the fact that the M21 was not field maintainable. It is ironic that the M24 is also not field maintainable with regard to its bolt group.

Should a sniper in a conventional Army unit break an extractor, there are channels for that rifle to be turned in for repair. This was invariably the case in Vietnam with the U.S. Marine M40 sniper rifle, also based on the Remington M700 action. However, for many special operations missions there are no readily available channels through which to return the sniper system to a repair facility. Even if there were, in all likelihood the mission would have to be scrubbed to do so. This is such a serious problem that one *Special Forces* sniper who was responsible for the sniping program for an entire SF Group told the author that he was suggesting each M24 be fitted with two complete bolt assemblies for special operations. That way, should an extractor break, the sniper could replace the entire bolt and continue the mission. In spite of this obvious need, and in spite of Remington's offer to fit two complete bolts to each rifle, the Army turned

down this option. In an unconventional warfare (UW) mission, resupply is almost entirely by air with no way to return weapons for repair. In such cases, the SF weapons men would have to carry in any special tools and spares to keep the M24 in operation.

The deficiencies with the M24 extractor are only a problem if something breaks. I regard the fact that the M24 does not have a detachable magazine as a major and inexcusable deficiency, even when everything is functioning correctly. The M24 can only be loaded one round at a time. It has a magazine capacity of only four rounds and a fully loaded capacity of only five rounds, including one in the chamber. In any engagement that takes more than five rounds, for all practical purposes the M24 reverts to being a single-shot weapon. If you are thinking, "So what if it can't be quickly reloaded, snipers only fire one or two shots at a time anyway," think again! This is a misconception brought about by the ambush style of sniping conducted by the Marines in Vietnam. The fact is that a sniper rifle should be a flexible weapon employable in the wide range of circumstances where precise small-arms fire can be effective against enemy personnel or equipment.

A good example would be the mechanized battlefield our forces are likely to encounter in Europe, the Middle East, or parts of Africa. A common sniper mission when facing tanks and armored personnel carriers is to engage all vehicle commanders who are exposed from their hatches. Obviously, if any vehicle commander can be hit, it will greatly affect that vehicle's operation. Even if they are not hit, such sniping will force all armored vehicle commanders to "button up," minimizing their vision and hampering their



Ghillie-suited sniper uses his No. 2 man as a rest while he sights ART-scoped M21. Author prefers such a weapon over the M24 for its detachable magazine and rate of fire if needed. Photo: courtesy DoD

movement and target engagement capabilities. Such a scenario will present the sniper with multiple moving targets that a five-round capacity and single-shot reload capability probably could not handle.

In urban warfare, snipers are often used to control avenues and sectors to prevent enemy movement and advance. Often, snipers are used to engage enemy crew-served weapon positions, such as machine-gun bunkers, gun

pits, etc., to silence the weapon until maneuvering forces can actually destroy the position. Any such sniper mission can easily require a rate and quantity of fire that the M24 could not supply. Isn't it a little ironic that during World War I, Corporal Alvin York was able to kill 25 enemy soldiers, silence an entire German machine gun battalion of 35 machine guns and capture 132 enemy prisoners using a clip-loaded, peep-sighted M1917 Enfield, but he probably could not perform the same feat 70 years later with the "modern" M24 SWS because of its inability to maintain a sufficient rate of fire? This is progress?



Besides specific missions that can require a higher rate and volume of fire than the M24 can supply, there are frequent chance encounters when a sniper makes accidental contact with an enemy patrol while going out or coming back from a mission. Usually the sniper is only accompanied by an observer armed with an M16A1. The author has talked with Army snipers who had just that happen to them in Vietnam, and all were happy that they had detachable-magazine fed weapons that could be reloaded quickly. They owed their lives to the fact that they could lay down a sufficient base of accurate fire to force the enemy patrol to halt long enough for them to disengage. Trying to do the same with

a five-shot rifle that must be reloaded one round at a time is, to say the least, hazardous to the health of the sniper.

A limited magazine capacity such as that of the M24 also largely prohibits the use of the sniper rifle for searching fire. Searching fire is used when the enemy cannot be seen, but his general location can be identified from his fire. This is a typical situation in heavily wooded terrain. One particularly good example of the use of precision searching fire was by a

sniper in the 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam. While he was traveling with a line company, the unit made contact with a large enemy force. He crawled forward to the point of contact and began engaging suspected enemy firing positions with precise searching fire. He fired close to the ground, spacing his rounds a few inches apart while traversing the suspected enemy positions. He managed to kill nine enemy in that one engagement with this technique; however, to accomplish this he also expended several 20-round magazines of ammunition, something the M24 could never do.

There are also those times when the sniper is operating in extreme cold, forcing him to wear trigger-finger mittens or gloves. The prospect of trying to reload a sniper rifle with single rounds under the pressure of such circumstances makes my blood run cold.

The lack of a detachable magazine also severely hinders the sniper's ability to switch types of ammunition to best engage a specific target. Earlier it was mentioned that the sniper may engage enemy equipment as well as personnel. It is in fact part of current U.S. special operations doctrine to use precise rifle fire to neutralize enemy equipment wherever possible. Targets can range from fuel tanks or blivets to radar dishes, even aircraft or missiles on the ground. Thus a sniper may need to switch his weapon's loading from match ball to armor piercing or armor piercing incendiary. With a full M24, the rounds which are already in the weapon must be removed singly or by dropping the floor plate. Then the weapon must be reloaded one round at a time. Compare that with just removing a magazine and replacing it with another one loaded with proper ammunition

for the particular fire mission.

Frankly, it makes no sense to me that U.S. snipers must be encumbered with a weapon that feeds from a four-round fixed magazine which must be reloaded one round at a time. This is particularly nonsensical considering the fact that all the standard U.S. Army sniper rifles since late World War II could be quickly reloaded using clips (M1C and M1D) or magazines (M14 or M21). It is even stranger to adopt such a weapon in light of the fact that the British L96A1, the Parker-Hale M85, the French FRF2, the Steyr SSG, the Springfield Armory M21, the German H&K PSG-1, the Israeli Galil Sniper rifle and the Soviet SVD sniper rifles, among others, all use detachable magazines. It is a design shortcoming that is totally inexcusable, as we are not talking here about developing new and sophisticated technology.

What is particularly ironic is the fact that the Army required Remington to replace the aluminum trigger guard and floor plate assembly of the M700 action with one made of steel. Since Remington does not make such an assembly in steel it was forced to have the steel assemblies custom made for the rifle, at considerable additional expense. The net result was to raise the cost of the rifle unnecessarily, make it heavier, increase the number of rustable parts, and still not provide a detachable magazine. A similar or even smaller expenditure could have easily equipped the rifle with a minimal-capacity but detachable box magazine. For example, the latest Brownells gunsmith supply catalog offers a magazine conversion assembly for the Remington M700 long

action. Called the "Kwik-Klip," it offers a steel, four-round magazine complete with aluminum trigger guard and floor plate for a retail price of \$55.90. While a four-round magazine is less than ideal, it is far better than single-round reloading. Such a system could undoubtedly be modified to handle 10- or even 20-round detachable magazines. Better yet would be a trigger guard assembly like that found on the Parker-Hale M85 sniper rifle, which would accept the already-in-service M14 magazines.

Another expensive design shortcoming of the M24 is its backup iron sights. Unlike the British L96A1, the Parker-Hale M85, the U.S. M21, the Israeli Galil sniper rifle, or even the Soviet SVD, the M24's iron sights are not integral with the weapon. They are designed to be carried separately and mounted when needed. The potential for these separate sights being lost, damaged, or otherwise unavailable for mounting when needed is extremely high considering the confusion and hard knocks of combat. In addition, M24 iron sights are the match-target type, which are expensive, bulky and

relatively fragile. They do enable the sniper to carry on his mission should the telescopic sight become unusable for some reason, but they are not nearly as satisfactory for most situations as the backup sights found on the M21 or on the latest British sniper rifles.

For example, if a sniper were parachuting or rappelling in from a chopper, he would normally detach his scope to prevent damage. With the other sniper rifles mentioned, he would have excellent iron sights already on the rifle and

ready for use when he hit the ground. With the M24 he would either have to go in without sights mounted or with a high probability of damaging his iron sights because they are so bulky, fragile and exposed. Assuming the iron sights are mounted on the M24, once on the ground the sniper would then have to completely remove both the front and rear sights and stow them away before the telescopic sight could be mounted. It provides an unnecessary delay at an often critical time, with a high probability that the iron sights will be lost when the change is being made

SNIPING AT THE M24 — ZEROED IN, OR ZERO DEFECTS?

Chuck Karwin writes from a wealth of practical combat experience. The U.S. Army draws its Mission Essential Need Statement (MENS) from a wealth of practical combat experience. We have here an interesting dichotomy. Always happy to get second (or more) opinions in an effort to get at all facets of an issue, SOF contacted two of our favorite ordnance experts — Major Jim Land (U.S. Marine Corps, Ret.), who was part of the Marine Corps sniper developmental team when they adopted the M700 and is now president of Royster Armaments, and our own in-house weapons authority and Technical Editor, Peter G. Kokalis. Their comments on Karwin's criticisms sometimes provide counterpoint, sometimes provide corroboration, but are always pertinent.

Regards the price. Kokalis notes, "We can all agree on this point. When I questioned a Remington representative about this, he stated that a portion of this price represented their 'developmental costs.' It is, after all, tantamount to bringing out a new model, but one which has a limit built into its market. And things such as special-order steel trigger housings are expensive."

Regards the necessity of a detachable box magazine, Kokalis replies, "I also agree with this. However, the importance of this feature depends on your projection of the sniper rifle's MENS. The project manager at Aberdeen Proving Ground told me that a detachable box-type magazine would have compromised the requirement for modification to caliber .300 Win Mag by merely changing the barrel. Again, which feature is more desirable depends entirely upon your interpretation of the MENS (which, I might add, is developed and presented by the user)." Jim Land continues, "A

box magazine is not a tactical improvement, and allowing for detachable box magazines, such as M14 magazines (or worse, a longer one for .300 Win Mag) tends to weaken the action and create problematical considerations with bedding and accuracy . . . if 'firepower' is necessary, then whoever deployed the sniper team did not do it right. The Marines use a two-man sniper team, with one job of the second man being to provide close cover for the sniper. The mission of a sniper is *not* to engage in firefights, but to take out selected, tactically important targets at long range."

Regards the extractor being vulnerable and not field-replaceable, Land observes that "the Marines experienced *no* problem with breakage of extractors; in fact, the M700 Remington was selected over the M70 Winchester because of the superior strength of the M700 extractor, and this was an important feature considering that the operating

environment demands an extractor which is positive in action and robust. Extra bolts were not issued, as it was never necessary. The Marine sniper platoon was at regimental level, and the sniper platoon had its own armorer, who had spares of every type if needed, but there simply was not a problem with breakage of extractors . . . and the Marines have had M700s in service for a long time." Kokalis contacted noted gunsmith Robbie Barrkman and reports, "Barrkman has seen only two broken extractors on Remington 700 actions in all his years as a gunsmith — both were badly abused. Right now Robbie has 26 very old Remington 700 rifles from LAPD SWAT in house for complete rebuilds — none have broken extractors. Extractors break far more frequently on machine guns, and yet no army that I know of issues spare extractors to the gun crews. If you are going to worry excessively about this, then just chuck a complete spare bolt into your pack. I'd be more



The M24 SWS — is the honeymoon over? Photo: courtesy Remington Arms, Inc.

worried about the scope holding zero or breaking than I would about breaking an extractor.”

Regards lack of integral iron sights, Land states, “A sniper has no need for iron sights; his backup man engages the close targets, if any.”

Regards .300 Win Mag potential, Jim continues: “Marine Corps long-range rifle teams have been using the .300 Win Mag for 600- to 1000-yard shooting for years and like it. I just got back from Picatinny Arsenal, and they are struggling to get the .300 approved right now. The troops want it, but supply people have misgivings about adding another caliber to supply channels, which was precisely what prevented the Marine Corps from adopting the .300 Win Mag as a sniper round.”

We asked Land if, based on his experience with the Marine Corps sniping program, he was satisfied with the M700 Remington or if he would prefer an autoloader (M21, or other). He replies, “No! With an autoloader, the sniper tends to get involved in the firefight, which is not his mission,

and when this happens his mission suffers. In Vietnam, we spotted more enemy troops from the flash of the sun off the flying brass from their Kalashnikov assault rifles than from any other cause; for this reason I prefer a bolt-action which will allow the sniper to slowly extract the spent case and put it back in his pocket. Brass from an autoloader must be policed up if you don’t want to give away a hide you might want to use again.”

Kokalis also has some further observations: “The U.S. Army is reportedly disgruntled with its new M24 SWS. At \$4,995 per crack, they will never be able to procure enough to move them from battalion-issue-only down to company level, where they are desperately needed. Each Soviet mechanized rifle platoon has one Dragunov-armed sniper. Furthermore, it has been reported that the aluminum bedding block has, in some instances, broken away from the Kevlar/graphite/glass-fiber reinforced stock, and that the completely adjustable buttplate assembly

(another specified requirement of the RFP) has proven itself to be a white elephant of no value in the field. Finally, after completion of its commitment to the U.S. Army, Leupold intends to drop its entire military/police scope line. To convince Congress they needed the M24, the previously issued and AMTU-inspired M21 (a scoped and tuned M14) was denounced until it became an anathema beyond redemption. Now these very same general officers are planning to shuffle back through the halls of Congress with a request for what they are now calling the ‘M14/Improved’ (a scoped and tuned M14).”

— Don McLean

Readers with combat sniper experience are invited to address their comments and observations to the FLAK editor at SOF.

under the pressure of combat.

Another typical situation is when there is a driving rain. Such weather conditions make use of a telescopic sight nearly impossible, but available visibility will often still allow use of iron sights out to several hundred meters. Such weather conditions can often come and go quickly. With the M24 the sniper would take off his scope and for a short but significant time have a rifle with no sights. Likewise in the reverse situation. With integral iron sights, the sniper cannot be caught with his pants down, so to speak. Integral, well-protected iron sights are a far better solution.

The announced contract price for the M24 SWS was \$4,995 for the first 500 units, with the price dropping \$1,000 for additional orders. Good sniper rifles don’t come cheap, but that seems a bit much. For comparison, consider Remington’s own Model 40-XB KS 7.62mm in the repeater version. It is basically equivalent to the M24, although the Kevlar stock and match-grade barrel are of different make and style than the latter. Suggested retail is \$1,147. Add to that about \$1,000 for the Leupold Ultra 10X scope and a generous \$500 for the back-up iron sights, scope case, deployment kit and case, and we are up to \$2,647. Since retail prices are being used, one can assume that a volume buy would realize a price near \$2,100.

H-S Precision manufactures the exact stock used on the M24 SWS. It is also a leading manufacturer of the highest grade of barrels and other precision shooting equipment and accessories. The H-S Precision catalog

Continued on page 78

BLOOD CHITS

Continued from page 64

bombers from a boat, bombed Japan, and now had just jumped from his plane onto the Chinese mainland, the officer responded in effect, "suuuure you did!" Doolittle had no ID, and when he tried to reason with the officer, his explanations were simply dismissed. To the officer Doolittle was merely an unkempt foreigner with a gun and no verifiable explanation for his presence. Had Chinese troops not found his parachute, which had been stolen by some local farm-

ers, he'd have been in deep trouble.

Far better was the system of the Flying Tigers and later the 14th U.S. Army Air Forces under Chennault. They had a "Blood Chit" or "Escape Flag" sewn into the linings of their A2 or G1 jackets or flight suits. It featured a Nationalist Chinese flag and Chinese writing that promised a reward to anyone helping the downed airman back to his lines. Originally, these Nationalist flags were sewn to the outside of the suits, until men started coming down in communist-held Chinese territory.

Later, in other theaters, airmen used the

United States flag. After World War II and during Korea, the Bay of Pigs, and throughout the war in Southeast Asia, the U.S. Air Force included the Blood Chit as part of the survival kit every aviator carried. Flyers for "civilian" Air America (AA) operating in Southeast Asia had to make do by spreading word through the bush telegraph that returning a downed AA flyer intact to U.S. offices would make the returner quite wealthy, and by wearing heavy, de-linkable gold bracelets and chains which could be bartered for favors, food or freedom.

In spite of their relatively wide issue to conventional military flyers, these Blood Chits have always been a hard item for collectors to find, because they are periodically updated and reissued and the old ones are destroyed. Some became available during the Southeast Asia withdrawal; others were kept by individual users as souvenirs. They are always a collector's item due to their rarity and historical significance; without access to a combat flyer's duffel bag, originals are hard to come by.

SOF friend Brigadier General Harry C. "Heine" Aderholt (USAF, Ret.) is offering to sell limited numbers of genuine, like-new and serially numbered Blood Chits, double-matted in silver- or gold-colored metal frames, in five different issues: (1) *Southeast Asia, West Central Pacific*: 1961 50-star issue in Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese, Cambodian, Laotian, Burmese, Malayan, Indonesian, Tagalog, Visayan, French and Dutch; (2) *Korean Conflict*: 1951 48-star issue in Japanese, Korean, Chinese, German, French, English, Russian, Burmese, Hindu and Urdu; (3) *European Theater*: 1961 48-star issue in Persian, Turkish, Italian, Finnish, German, French, Swedish, Arabic, Greek, Polish, English and Russian; (4) *USSR and Satellite Countries*: 1960 48-star issue in Arabic, German, French, Polish, Czech, Slovak, English, Greek, Bulgarian, Russian, Turkish, Rumanian; and (5) *Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crises*: 1960 50-star issue in French, Spanish, Portuguese and English.

These are available directly from Aderholt (23 Miracle Strip Parkway, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548; phone 904-243-4601), postpaid and satisfaction or money back guaranteed at \$140 each, or \$550 for the set of five, while they last. Any profit from the sale of these will go to a fund to help Victims of the Christic Institute (i.e. lawyers' fees). A worthwhile goody for your collection of military history or to hang on your back bar, and a very worthwhile cause will benefit. ☒

.357 MAGNUMS

Continued from page 27

with a full metal jacket (FMJ). All weighed 158 grains and were essentially non-deforming but offered excellent penetration.

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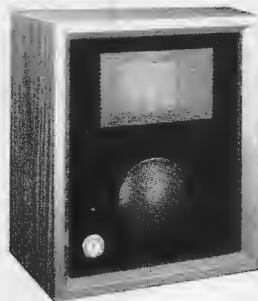
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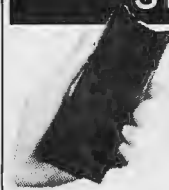
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years after its inception. Chester Gould's famous comic-strip character, Dick Tracy, consistently stopped fleeing villains by cracking their engine blocks with his .357 Magnum. It was widely acclaimed as the world's most "powerful" handgun cartridge — whatever that meant. After half a century, our knowledge of what is actually required to produce effective handgun ammunition has only recently grown in an asymptotic manner (See "Killing Effect," SOF, December '88).

Penetration remains the most important single parameter. The bullet must penetrate deeply enough to crush, cut and break through the human body's vital structures and organs. We need at least 12 inches of penetration through soft tissue and preferably up to 20 inches. Once we have the required penetration, the heaviest handgun bullet that makes the biggest hole will do the most damage. That means we're right back to 158-grain slugs in caliber .357 Magnum/.38 Special. If we can expand a soft-point or hollow-point bullet in this weight to no more than twice its original diameter and significantly increase the size of the wound track without sacrificing penetration, we're on the course to effective performance. Driving such a bullet at the highest possible velocity is certain to be counterproductive, as it will invariably result in over expansion and under penetration.

Black Hills Shooters Supply (Dept. SOF, 3401 South Highway 79, Rapid City, SD 57701; phone 605-348-5150) markets a .357 Magnum load that appears to meet most of the requirements for truly effective ammunition in this caliber. Using Remington's 158-grain Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) bullet, they have dumped just enough propellant in the case to drive the projectile at no more than 1,100 fps out of the 4-inch barrel of our Taurus Model 66, with a standard deviation of only 19 fps. At this velocity the bullet expands to no more than .61 caliber. Expansion is usually perfectly symmetrical, as the individual petals on the scalloped jacket peel back evenly at the cannelure (crimping groove). SOF's tests indicate that after about 12 inches of penetration in soft tissue, a portion of the mushroom's rim usually breaks away to leave a projectile of approximately .47 caliber (weighing 120 to 130 grains) which penetrates to a total depth of 17 to 20 inches. Overall, this is just about what we're looking for — sufficient penetration and reasonable expansion. While the 158-grain unjacketed lead hollow-point bullet in this caliber offers somewhat better performance, leading is a serious problem.

Accuracy testing of the Taurus revolvers and Black Hills ammunition was conducted at a range of 21 feet, a realistic distance for the most probable self defense scenarios. When fired offhand using a strong Weaver position, slow-fire, double-action shooting will produce groups under 3 inches. Picking up the cadence will enlarge the group size — this is as it should be. Shooters should never attempt target accuracy in stress en-

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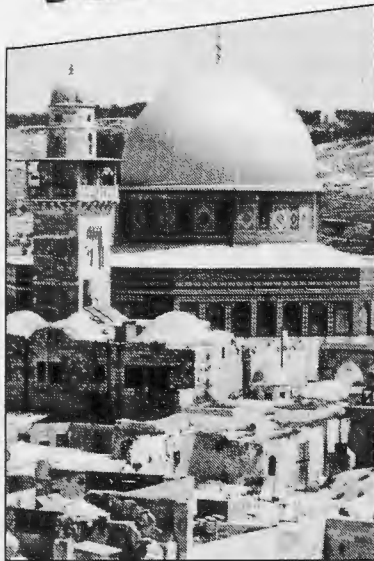
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- An Israeli army military briefing on the Middle East situation.

- Banquets with army veterans and airborne staff.
- Official wreath-laying ceremonies at the Israeli Paratroopers Memorial.
- Visit restricted military sites in Israel and on the Golan Heights and a hands-on display of captured Russian and German tanks.
- Attend briefing at the "Good Fence" position between Israel and Lebanon.
- Visit Holy sites in Jerusalem; Masada; Jericho; the Sea of Galilee; the Negev Desert and swim in the Dead Sea.

This eight-day tour includes round-trip airfare from New York; ground transportation in Israel; deluxe hotel accommodations with breakfast; and most dinners; and all military and historic tours.

Supplementary five-day tour in the Negev Desert with destination of Eilat on the Red Sea also available at extra cost.

Airborne troops are first in, last out, so don't wait! Only 200 participants can be handled by our Israeli hosts, so we must make this a first-come, first-served registration. You'll receive your complete information packet and itinerary as soon as possible. A \$250* registration fee is required and must accompany this form so that we can slot you on the manifest. (*Registration fee is refundable up until 60 days prior to the tour.)

Fill out the registration coupon below, and mail it with your cashier's check or money order made payable to: I.A.A.V., Suite 181, 606 W. Barry Street, Chicago, IL 60657.

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vironments. Placing all your shots within the approximately 8x12-inch area of the target's upper torso (commonly referred to as the "center of mass") with as much speed as is practical is far more important than obtaining precisely aimed 1-inch groups.

Felt recoil in this usually ass-kicking caliber is greatly moderated by use of the relatively mild Black Hills ammunition. Two significant corollaries follow as a consequence. Recovery times for second-shot target reacquisition are noticeably reduced, and the revolver is subjected to far less punishment.

Those still mesmerized by rotating cylinders would be well advised to closely examine the Taurus Model 66 series. These Brazilian wheelguns are every bit as sturdy and reliable as their U.S. look-alikes and considerably less expensive. Rumor has it that within a reasonable length of time Taurus will commence production of their handguns within the U.S. zone of interior. For further information, contact Taurus International Firearms, Dept. SOF, 4563 Southwest 71st Avenue, Miami, FL 33155; phone 305-662-2529. ☒

I WAS THERE

Continued from page 13

They came to life, grabbed their M16s and un-assed the wreckage — expecting an explosion any second.

As they cleared the chopper, the company of NVA ran through the saplings to kill or capture them, but just as the first NVA came into sight, four D models, 15 feet above the ground and pulling in every ounce of power that they could to maintain a hover, came to a stop above them.

From off the skids where they had been riding, the "Headhunters," 20 men strong, jumped 15 feet to the ground and landed fighting.

From one of the D models a crewman leaned out and pointed directions to Sabens and company, who ran about 30 yards to a clearing where the D model landed and picked them up for the three-minute ride back to our base camp.

As the infantrymen beat back the NVA, a hook came over with its sling, and a hookup man scrambled down and rigged the downed bird for sling-loading out.

As George and I spoke, the infantrymen were still in contact with the NVA, and between them, the gunships and scouts they killed quite a few — while sustaining only one casualty themselves. One trooper broke an ankle jumping to the rescue.

God, what a movie that would have made, I thought as George and the others headed for the coffee point — but who would believe it? The only

thing missing were bugles as the Cav rescued its own. ☒

NAVY WIZARDS

Continued from page 63

fingerprints of a nonexistent carrier. What the Soviet listeners received, as the real carrier conducted operations miles away, was a combination of live broadcasts simulating carrier activities (imitative deception) and prerecorded electronic background signatures transmitted in the 2- to 30-megacycle low frequency range that were intended to be, and were, easily detected, identified and pinpointed by the Soviet's worldwide listening/directional signals intelligence (SIGINT) system.

And before they did a number on Soviet intelligence trawlers shadowing the 7th Fleet in the Gulf of Tonkin, BJ teams were giving them hell in the Pacific Missile Test Range. There, the trawlers lurked to listen to and copy classified data-link frequencies along the range during missile tests.

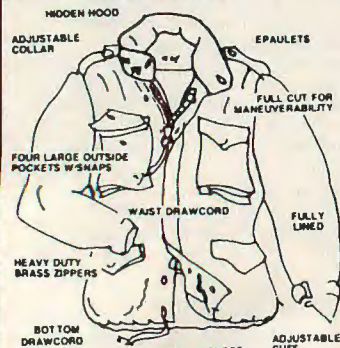
This was back in 1965 when the BJs first developed and installed their secure, portable communications shelters aboard destroyers. Their jamming system consisted of six variable UHF (225 to 400 megahertz) channels, each of which could be modulated with selected jamming signals. With the shore-based launch sites at their backs, the

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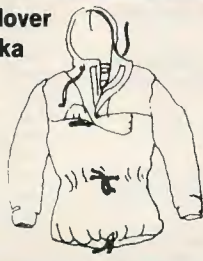
Please do not mistake this for a similar ad—WE are the ORIGINAL! The very latest U.S. Army issue all-weather field jacket made of 50% nylon/50% cotton with water repellency is fully lined and is manufactured under strict quality standards by a prime government contractor in the United States. Excellent for hunting, work or leisure.

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Rates: \$52.00/night S/D (plus 7% tax) before June 17, 1989. After June 17, 1989 rates are \$56.00/night (plus 7% tax). Cutoff date for convention registration is August 17, 1989. Sahara Hotel Room Reservation # is 1-800-634-6666. Be sure to tell them you are an SOF Conventioneer!

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Preregistration fee is \$135.00 if received by September 10, 1989. After that date registration fee is \$150.00. Early Bird registration deadline date is July 4, 1989. All Early Birds receive a special **10th Anniversary Commemorative Badge** — which will be given out at the Convention. No cancellation refunds will be given after August 31, 1989.

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YES! I want to be a part of the SOF 1989 Convention **and** receive my special Early Bird 10th Anniversary Commemorative Badge (to be given out at the convention).

I understand my Early Bird registration must be received by July 4, 1989 to qualify for my Badge.

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destroyer would pull as close as possible to the trawler but stay far enough away so as not to impede his maneuvering room. After positioning their directional antenna, the BJs would fire up their jammers and deny Soviet listeners any sensitive, classified missile data . . . and do it in a way that did not interfere with range data telemetry up-links.

It must be stressed at this juncture that Beach Jumper Unit One personnel serving with the Western Pacific Detachment were an integral part of its special warfare effort both at the planning and operational level. The commanding officers of the BJU-1 for the Vietnam era were men with naval careers dating back to World War II who had specialist expertise in communications, radar or electronics, plus unconventional warfare training, and who had served previous tours with Beach Jumper units.

When the Beach Jumper's participation in Vietnam operations came to a close in 1972, BJU-1 was renamed Fleet Composite Operational Readiness Group One (FLTCORGRU-1). Command rank was upgraded from lieutenant commander to captain for commanding officers.

For their Vietnam service and in recognition of their support of special riverine operations, BJU-1 and its Western Pacific Detachment were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, Navy Unit Commendation, and two Meritorious Unit Commendations.

On 1 August 1974, FLTCORGRU-1 was designated a subordinate command of the U.S. 3rd Fleet, and on 1 June 1986 was renamed Fleet Tactical Deception Group Pacific (FLTDECGRUPAC) by the chief of naval operations to make its mission more readily identifiable to the fleet. The group's activities now cover the entire spectrum of naval warfare. They support the Pacific Fleet during scheduled exercises and in real world and contingency matters, to include counterterrorism. Teams from FLTDECGRUPAC might be found in aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, as well as amphibious ships.

The unclassified mission statement of FLTDECGRUPAC is "to assist commanders in the planning and conduct of tactical military deception operations." As has been shown by the kinds of activities they conducted under this general heading during the Vietnam era, it can safely be assumed that today's electronic warriors are capable of conducting a variety of covert and clandestine deception missions not only on the tactical but at the strategic level. The following is a scenario of the kind of task FLTDECGRUPAC might be called upon to handle today, related to the author by a former commander of BJU-1.

Problem: The Soviets have bugged the U.S. Embassy in Moscow.

Commanding Officer, FLTDECGRUPAC is secretly directed by the CNO to draw up and execute a plan to defeat the electronic listening devices.

His proposed solution: To compromise them by use of electronic manipulative cover and deception means. Deployed

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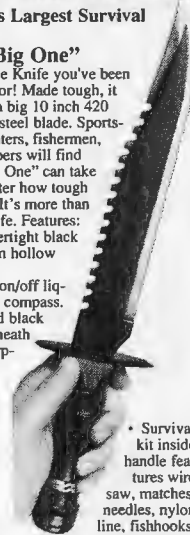
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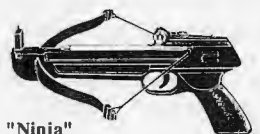
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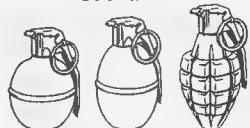


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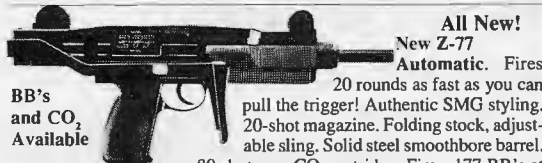


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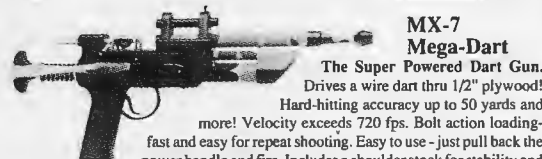
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FLTDECGRUPAC teams would first study the embassy routine, then prepare detailed plans and scripts for their deception scheme. They would then develop relevant techniques, design specialized equipment (if not already on hand) and implement the plan. Near the bugs in the embassy, deception team personnel would, in effect, put on a show for the clandestine Soviet listeners, reading from scripts and conducting realistic play-acting to purposely mislead them and thus cover actual embassy activities and intentions.

Today, Fleet Tactical Deception Groups follow in the footsteps of their Beach Jumper ancestors as the Navy's elite electronic deception masters supporting U.S. maritime strategy and naval operations around the world. ✕

SNIPER SNAFU

Continued from page 69

offers what amounts to the same rifle as the M24, except it uses their equivalent match barrel. It has the same stock and the same Remington M700 action. Retail price of this rifle without sights and other accessories is \$1,289. Adding on \$1,500 for the scope, iron sights, etc., we have \$2,789 retail. Again assuming a volume contract discount, we have a price of about \$2,300.

Given these two comparable examples, why does the M24 SWS cost \$4,995? The

major reason appears to be marketplace ineptness on the part of the Army in requiring Remington to supply expensive special modifications and supplementary equipment along the lines of the classic \$600 toilet seat. In this case, instead of the contractor ripping off the government, it appears that the government is ripping off itself. A Remington spokesperson confided to me that the company is worried that even at the admittedly high contract price for the M24 it may not make any money on the deal because of all the special requirements the Army has heaped on it. One of these is a one-year, no-fault warranty on the M24 SWS. For a nondevelopmental procurement of a supposedly "off-the-shelf" sniper rifle, it seems that the M24 SWS has an awful lot of new developmental and non-off-the-shelf features about it.

I will let you be the judge of whether the Army is paying too much for the M24. I will add, however, that a reliable source in the Army states that the Army's own Marksmanship Training Unit at Ft. Benning told the M24 procurement officers that the MTU could build the M24 in-house for \$2,000, although they do not currently have the production capacity to meet the Army's needs.

How is it possible for the Army to adopt a sniper rifle with a non-field-maintainable bolt group and non-integral iron sights and without a detachable magazine? It is possible because whoever wrote up the original specifications, out of ignorance, did not require such features and was apparently

working without a genuine understanding of sniper missions and requirements. In addition, the required feature of convertibility to .300 Winchester Magnum eliminated practically every other 7.62mm NATO sniper rifle in the world, since they invariably use short actions specifically set up for the shorter cartridge.

The trials for the M24, if you want to call them that, had only two entries, one by Steyr and one by Remington. The Steyr entry did not meet accuracy requirements and was eliminated, leaving only the Remington entry. The poor performance of the Steyr came as a surprise, since the Steyr SSG is widely regarded as one of the most accurate off-the-shelf sniper rifles on the world market. A source that examined the Steyr entry stated that it had the appearance of a jury-rigged piece. This was probably because the normal Steyr sniper rifle is built on the company's shorter action, and the entry had to be on its long action to accommodate the convertibility requirement. Whatever the reason, the Steyr did not shoot well enough. The Remington won by default.

The M24 was procured as a Non-Development Item (NDI). The NDI approach to procurement was chosen because the need for a better sniper rifle in the Army had reached a critical point. In fact, the need had been critical for many years. As early as 1975, I was briefed at Ft. Benning that if any significant number of brigades exercised their optional sniper Table of

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Organization and Equipment (TOE), as would likely happen in event of a major military conflict, the Army had insufficient M21 Sniper rifles to meet the need. Obsolete .30-06 M1D sniper rifles would have to be issued to many units. The M21 was labor intensive to produce, expensive and hard to maintain. I was told then by the person responsible for sniper rifle development in the Infantry Combat Development Office that what was needed was some sort of off-the-shelf sniper rifle. In spite of this obvious requirement for the development of a new sniper rifle, nothing significant was done to procure one for another 11 or 12 years.

The result of all that waiting was that a new sniper weapon system was needed quickly — hence the NDI approach. The way the NDI system is supposed to work is that the military, in this case the Army, draws up specifications for what it needs. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is sent out to the industry. Individual manufacturers submit test samples of their item, which are all tested against the desired specifications. Manufacturers whose entries satisfactorily pass the tests then submit competitive bids, with the lowest bid winning the contract. There is much more to it, but that is it in a nutshell. The idea behind the NDI approach is that the military gets a piece of equipment that can do the job required at a competitive price without spending money or time on R&D. When everything works right it is a good approach. For example, in spite of all the controversy and stumbling on the part of

the Army, the NDI approach got the military an excellent 9mm pistol — M9 Beretta — at a good price, .

A key to the success of an NDI procurement lies in the original specifications or requirements submitted to the industry. Since in this case these specifications did not require a detachable magazine or a field-maintainable bolt group, it was to be expected that at least some entries would lack such features. The inclusion of the requirement for convertibility to .300 Winchester Magnum for some possible future use was totally unreasonable for an NDI sniper rifle procurement. It was unreasonable because NDIs are supposed to draw from already-developed technology. Not a single one of the world's sniper rifles had convertibility from 7.62mm NATO to .300 Winchester Magnum as a feature in its original form. Since Steyr and Remington already produced sporting rifles in .300 Winchester Magnum, they were able to make a quick adaptation and come up with entries.

Regardless, inclusion of the .300 Winchester Magnum requirement eliminated the vast majority of the world's very finest 7.62mm NATO sniper rifles from the competition, even though what we wanted was a "shelf" 7.62mm NATO sniper rifle! When only two entries were received, the trials should have been stopped. Then the situation should have been reevaluated. But because the trials weren't stopped for lack of participation and the Army proceeded lemming-like to the next step of procuring from

the lowest (and in this case only) qualified bidder, there will undoubtedly be criticism that an entry was shown favoritism. Although that criticism is not justified, it looks even worse when the extremely high price of the winning (and only) entry is considered.

What should be done? In my opinion, procurement of the M24 should be stopped. New trials should be held in which the convertibility-to-.300-Winchester requirement is dropped, or only included as a desirable but not mandatory feature. The new specifications must require field-maintainable-and-replaceable bolt parts, a detachable magazine and rugged, integral, fine-adjustment peep sights. The sniper rifles of our allies such as the British, French, Germans, etc., should be included in the trials for comparison, even if their manufacturers do not want to enter the morass of a U.S. sniper-rifle contract. Small, independent manufacturers should not automatically be eliminated, since they may be able to sub-contract major production to a larger manufacturer or expand themselves to meet Army production requirements. ✕

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Continued from page 25

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multiple officers are involved in the surveillance then one officer should be assigned log duty. While this may seem like a mundane chore, it is a crucial part of the surveillance.

A surveillance officer should always remain alert. The activity which the surveillance is supposed to observe may happen in the blink of an eye. Don't get caught daydreaming, or worse — sleeping. If the surveillance has worn on to the point where the officer becomes bored or exhausted, he should be relieved or replaced.

Most surveillances are very dull because the officer will either be riding all over town or cooped up in a van for hours at a time. In these cases, an officer must have extreme patience and good endurance. Remember your ultimate purpose: obtaining information.

Conducting a successful surveillance requires plenty of advance preparation. Study files on the subject for any information that might prove useful. Make sure you have the correct name and address. Have a good description, a photograph if possible, including known characteristics and mannerisms. Obtain files on known associates of the subject.

If practical, surveillance officers should make a thorough reconnaissance of the area to determine traffic conditions and identify suitable vantage points, paying particular attention to dead-end streets. A common trick for identifying a tail is to go up a dead-end or one-way street, proceed through a red light or engage in similar anomalous behavior to see if the suspected tail will follow suit.

An important thing to remember is to always carry enough cash for an extended surveillance. Don't carry large bills; large denominations will draw attention to you as they are often hard to break. Make sure you have plenty of change in the event phone calls are necessary.

When more than one officer is involved in a surveillance, the Murphy's Law effect increases geometrically. Therefore, very deliberate, detailed planning is necessary. One of the participants should be designated as the officer in charge (OIC). The OIC should have the final word on all decisions pertaining to the operation. When controlling numerous officers, a system of tactics and communication should be devised, disseminated and thoroughly understood by all participants. It is at this point that the Murphy's Law plan should be finalized. Every officer should understand the contingency plan in the event it becomes necessary to use it.

Make sure each surveillance officer has a radio which is operational, that your teams all have common frequencies available and all officers know



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what they are, and that each unit has a fully charged battery plus at least one spare. Earphones are optional, but when working a foot surveillance a person wearing a set of Walkman-type headphones is far less conspicuous than a person holding a portable radio. A hand-held microphone is preferable for the same reason. Be sure that either a secure channel or a code system is being used. Never use radios on an unsecure channel since violators and news media use scanners to monitor law enforcement channels.

If the surveillance is to be lengthy, arrangements should be made for a command post (CP) so that officers will have a central location to report to or return to if the need arises. The CP should have secure telephone lines and backup equipment such as chargers for portables, extra cameras, film, maps of the area, extra information packets on the suspect, a place to rest and, most important, an area for your log person to work in and maintain the central log. Easy access in and out of the CP is important.

Suitable relief should be planned for the officers. It's tough being cooped up in a van for eight hours, feeling like the OIC has forgotten you. After about eight hours an officer's attention will start to wander. An eight-hour shift on a four-hour bladder can be torture — an empty bleach jug can help. For this and reasons such as simple fatigue, an officer's time on post should be closely monitored by the OIC.

In certain narcotics surveillances it will be imperative that the officer be close enough to the suspect to overhear conversations that may prove fruitful, as well as witness transactions. The one-man foot surveillance is the most difficult surveillance task to perform, as the suspect must be kept in sight at all times since he may make a drop or pick-up at any given time, or make contact with the main man, etc. Thus, one-man surveillances should be avoided whenever possible. This type surveillance will usually be very close and often dependent on pedestrian traffic and the physical environs. When walking on the opposite side of the street, the officer should keep almost abreast of the suspect. It is always necessary to be close enough to observe the suspect when he enters buildings, turns corners, or makes similar abrupt moves.

The probability of success will increase with the use of two officers. It affords greater security against detection and reduces the risk of losing the suspect. On streets that are crowded with pedestrian and vehicular traffic, both officers should normally remain on the same side of the street as the suspect, with the first officer some distance back. Officers should have a



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prearranged plan for switching their positions. On streets which are not as crowded, the second officer can walk abreast on the opposite side of street. In order to avoid detection, officers should periodically change positions to ensure that they are not compromised.

With a team of more than two officers working the surveillance the chances of success are greatly enhanced. This will also help detect countersurveillance (the suspect having one of his men follow him to see if he is being watched). A sufficient number of officers on the detail will also allow for continual rotation and even an officer dropping out if he feels that he has been spotted.

The progressive or leapfrog method of foot surveillance is a technique an officer should try to avoid because of the possibility that the suspect may change his routine. The leapfrog method is where an officer will plan on moving ahead of the suspect and then watching his actions. If the suspect has a set route or pattern, this method can be useful since it will allow the surveillance team to pick up the suspect later in his route if they lose contact. But, bear in mind that even if the suspect appears to be predictable it does not mean that he will use the same route every time. Do not try to second guess! Leapfrogging should be used only if continuous tailing of the suspect is too risky.

By the use of combined foot/auto surveillance, officers will always be assured of transportation if the suspect should board a bus, train, or meet up with someone who has transportation. Several officers can also be carried in the surveillance vehicle, and the officers on foot can be frequently changed to avoid detection. Common sense must be exercised in the operation of the vehicle, as either fast or slow movements or erratic driving patterns may make it highly noticeable. Try to stay with the flow of traffic.

Single-vehicle surveillance shares the same problems that exist with one-man surveillance, but if only one car is available you will have to make do. The vehicle should be behind the suspect's at all times, with the distance varying with the amount of traffic. In city traffic no more than three vehicles should be allowed between you and the suspect. If at all possible stay to the rear of the suspect's vehicle since this position is the least likely to draw attention. In rural or open areas it is wise to give the suspect as much lead as possible. If the road has few intersections then the surveillance vehicle may even lose sight of the suspect at times. For night surveillance make sure all of your external lights are in working order and avoid using your high beams as much as possible. If you can get to the sus-

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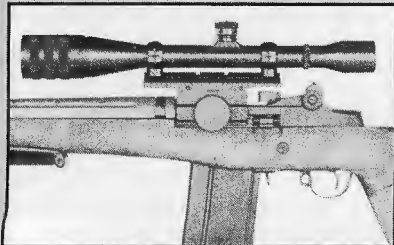
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pect's vehicle, without endangering your case, a handy trick is to pull one of the tag lights loose and leave it hanging directly below the bumper. The bright white light will stand out, making night surveillance easier.

Wherever possible a two-car surveillance should be used. Again, this will increase the probability of success in the surveillance. In city areas during daylight, both surveillance vehicles should be behind the suspect's auto. If the streets allow, the second car can parallel the target. When the suspect makes a turn the second car will be in position to follow him and assume the surveillance lead. While operating on interstate highways, one can go ahead to the next exit in the event that the suspect leaves the roadway. One of the easiest ways to blow an interstate surveillance is to have the suspect look up and see the same auto in his mirror at every stop.

With a multiple-vehicle surveillance, members of the surveillance team can even monitor the suspect from the front. This method can also be efficient in night surveillance using tips mentioned earlier. Three or more vehicles in the surveillance are like three or more officers — the more the merrier, as long as control and good communication are maintained.

Using the leapfrog surveillance technique with an automobile is much safer than in a foot surveillance because the officer will have more mobility. Autos should be stationed at intervals along a known route. After the suspect's car has passed, one officer can pass the suspect's auto and take up another position further down the road and wait for the suspect to pass again. In this manner surveillance can be maintained without actually following the suspect. This technique has the same disadvantages as a foot surveillance. The most obvious is that the suspect may change routes suddenly.

The use of aircraft for surveillance is very efficient, as they can follow a suspect without drawing attention. When used in conjunction with appropriate ground surveillance, success is almost a certainty. Utilizing aircraft in your surveillance makes it doubly important that a secure form of communication be used. The pilot should also have an observer. If possible, mark the suspect's vehicle in some way to make it easier to track from the air.

Stationary or fixed surveillance is usually done from a position that will give maximum visibility of the target, yet afford the officers some freedom of movement. The base may be a house, apartment, van, boat or any other number of locations. The base should have an exit which will allow officers to freely come and go without detection. A stationary surveillance is appropriate

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when it is anticipated that it will cover an extended period.

Surveillance officers using a vehicle for their stationary surveillance points should take care to not let the little things give them away. For instance, consider a vehicle sitting at the curb in the middle of the summer with an individual in it and the windows rolled up. The car has been sitting there for several hours. It will not take a genius to figure out that the car is running and the air conditioning is on. Next case, the windows are down and there is a pile of cigarette butts outside the driver's door, and coffee cups all over the dash . . . next to a walkie-talkie. Such small details as these can kill your surveillance faster than a speeding bullet.

A tip for stationary vehicle surveillance where only one officer is involved is for the officer to be sitting on the passenger side of the vehicle as if he were waiting for someone. This does not draw as much attention as a person sitting at the steering wheel.

REVIEW THE BASICS:

Plan, prepare and properly equip for a successful surveillance; if you can pool manpower and equipment resources with another agency for mutual benefit, do so.

Always plan for the Murphy factor, and make sure all officers know what the contingency plan is.

Take good notes as soon as possible — a recorder is recommended; keep a chronological log.

Deploy enough equipment to get the job done — don't wait until you're in the field to think "why didn't I bring the VCR?"

Try not to arouse the suspicions of uniformed police in the area who are not part of the surveillance team.

Don't automatically assume you've been spotted when your suspect acts suspiciously. Stay in your role until confident you've been burned.

If you get burned, do not immediately go to the office or CP — the suspect may then be tailing you.

Always be on the lookout for possible countersurveillance.

Never peek from behind doors, around buildings, poles and so forth — such sudden and obvious movements will certainly draw attention to you.

Always look and act as if you belong to the area you're in; consider your dress, your demeanor, your vehicle, your speech and your actions.

Be leery getting information from hotel clerks, bellboys and others who might be on the payroll of the suspect.

Last, but not least, it is not dishonorable to "blow" a surveillance; everyone involved in this kind of work has done it. Professionals will learn from their mistakes and use that hard-won information to do better on the next surveillance. ☒

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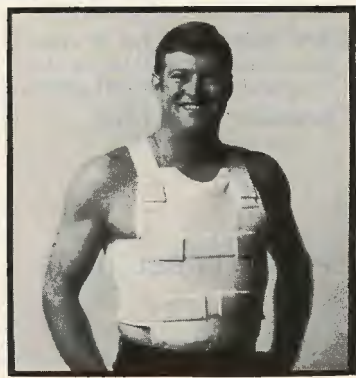


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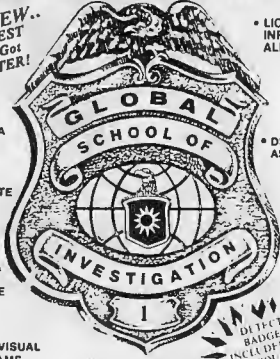
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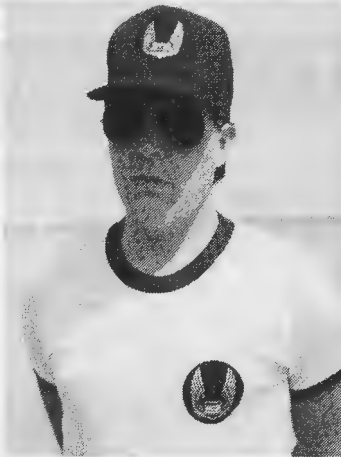
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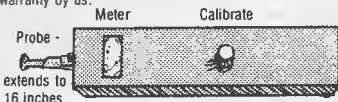
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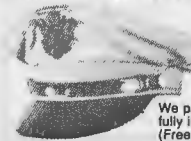
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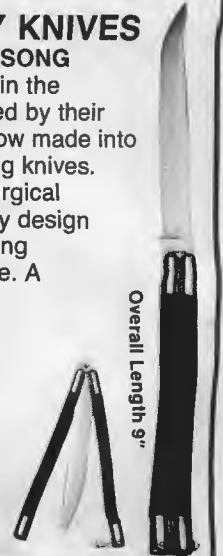
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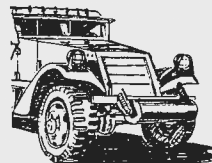
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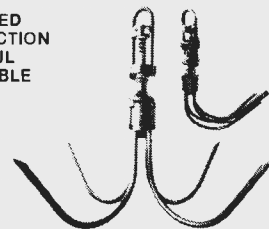
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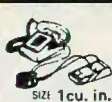
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PARTING SHOT

by Thomas J. Berger

Case Closed on *USS Liberty*



I have always been impressed with SOF's dedication to accurate and fair reporting. Therefore I feel compelled to respond to R. R. Fraser's inaccurate and highly biased Parting Shot article, "No Justice for *USS Liberty*," in the September 1988 issue of SOF.

Among several misstatements of fact is Fraser's contention that, "... a thorough investigation of the affair has never taken place." Actually, as Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara told Congress on 26 July 1967, "It was the conclusion of the investigatory body, headed by an admiral of the navy in whom we have great confidence, that the attack was not intentional."

On what he admits is nothing more than "speculation" stimulated by a two-year-old unofficial and unsupported article, Fraser insists that the tragedy could not possibly have been an accident. The facts lead to the opposite conclusion. Radio transmissions reportedly overheard by *Liberty* crewmen identifying the ship as American occurred, as Fraser admits, "prior to the attack" and were presumably between low-flying warplanes headed for bombing runs on Egyptian targets. Mordechai Hod, former Israeli Air Force Chief, has stated that no Israeli planes were sent on reconnaissance of the ship prior to the attack. Israeli positions at El Arish had come under fire from an Egyptian ship that morning.

French-built Dassault Mirage IIIs, shown here, along with Dassault MD-452 Mystere IVs, attacked the *USS Liberty* on 2 May 1967. The attack heavily damaged the ship, killing and wounding over 200 U.S. sailors.

The *Liberty* was only 14 miles off the Sinai coast and far from the 6th Fleet to which it belonged. Even our own government did not know where the *Liberty* was, since orders to remain at least 20 miles from the Egyptian coast were issued by the Joint Chiefs of Staff but never received by the *Liberty*. Furthermore, as reported by a high-ranking former Israeli naval officer, Shlomo Erell, to the Associated Press on 5 June 1977, "We were advised by proper authorities that there was no American ship within 100 miles." According to testimony of crew members, in the investigation which R. R. Fraser says never took place, the lack of wind before the attack would have made it difficult if not impossible to recognize the American flag which went down in the first assault, and the *Liberty* admittedly bore a resemblance to the Egyptian ship *El-Quseir*.

Also, the initial report on the *Liberty*'s speed put it (erroneously) at 22 knots which, along with its high masts and elaborate antennas, suggested

that it was a military vessel. The combat-experienced readers of SOF know that with so many confusing factors in the heat of an all-out war tragic mistakes are not only possible but readily understandable. In view of recent events in the Persian Gulf, including accidental attacks on both planes and ships by American forces and others, even less militarily sophisticated individuals should see how easily such tragedies can occur.

In any case, why would Israel divert warplanes from important military targets in Egypt, its most formidable enemy, to purposely destroy a ship belonging to its staunchest ally? The hypothesis outlined by Fraser can only be described as ludicrous. The theory that Israel feared the *Liberty* was using its monitoring equipment to uncover and expose to American disapproval "... their plans to invade Syria" is obviously spurious for two reasons. First, the *Liberty*'s location, far south (just off the Egyptian-Israeli border) was hardly an optimal or logical position for monitoring activities on the northern border with Syria. More to the point, why would Israel, already under attack by massive Arab armies on two fronts, feel any need to hide its response to Syrian aggression? The other suggestion for an Israeli motive is even more ridiculous. The idea that Israel "simply botched" a plan to "sink the ship with all hands" and somehow blame the Arabs in order to "build anti-Arab and pro-Israeli sentiments among the American people" ignores the fact that American sentiment was already heavily in favor of Israel. To risk the complete loss of support of their strongest and most loyal ally by sinking one of our ships and then to have "simply botched" the job would suggest that Israel was not only incredibly stupid but also militarily inept. These are qualities which clearly do not apply to the state of Israel.

Finally, Fraser's claims that after Israel's apology "... the U.S. government considered the episode over" is simply not true. Either because of ignorance or, more likely, his obvious anti-Israeli sentiment, Fraser neglected to mention the fact that Israel also paid nearly \$13 million in reparations to the United States and to the families of the victims. The last payment was received in December 1980, and only then was this tragic episode finally closed. Fraser's inane suggestion that it should be reopened as the focus of yet another costly and pointless congressional investigation is absurd. ✕

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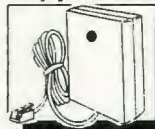
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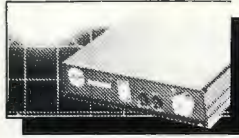
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